BENNETT, COLEMAN & CO. LTD. | Estd. 1838 | VOL. 43 NO.78 BENGALURU | THURSDAY, APRIL 2, 2026 | METRO | PAGES 22 | PRICE ₹6**

# THE TIMES OF INDIA

INCLUDES 4 PAGES OF BANGALORE TIMES

INDIA'S LARGEST ENGLISH NEWSPAPER | To subscribe call 1800 1200 004 or visit subscribe.timesofindia.com

**Gianluigi Donnarumma-led Italy suffer a heartbreaking exit from World Cup qualification race after losing to Bosnia and Herzegovina** in a tense penalty shootout, marking their 3rd straight failure to reach the global tournament, P 17

**American journalist Shelly Renee Kittleson, who was kidnapped in Baghdad, had tried to cross from Syria into Iraq three weeks earlier** and was initially turned back, an Iraqi official says, P 16

**Pakistan and Afghanistan hold first round of peace talks**, with China mediating to broker a durable ceasefire, two Pakistani officials say. Even as talks are going on, Afghanistan accuses Pak of firing mortars into its territory, P 16

**Spain star Lamine Yamal condemns anti-Muslim chants by Spanish fans during a friendly soccer game** in the latest incident to dent the nation's sporting image, P 17

## FCRA bill not taken up amid oppn protests

Opposition protests against a bill to amend the foreign contribution regulation law rocked Parliament Wednesday, forcing adjournment of proceedings in Lok Sabha amid allegations that BJP was trying to control independent NGOs. Parliamentary affairs minister Kiren Rijiju said the bill seeks to protect national security and was not aimed at any religion. P 10

## Grenade blast at BJP C'garh office, none injured

A hand grenade was lobbed at the Punjab BJP office in Chandigarh's Sector 37 on Wednesday, sparking panic in the area and a security alert. The police are on the lookout for two suspects after CCTV cameras captured them. The blast took place at 4.50pm. No one was hurt as the grenade detonated in a parking lot, missing the boundary wall of the BJP office. P 5

## Sunetra's letter to poll panel silent on Praful's post

A recent letter signed by NCP chief Sunetra Pawar and sent to the Election Commission has surfaced on social media without the designations of party seniors Praful Patel and Sunil Tatkare. Sunetra reached Delhi Wednesday where she is expected to meet key NDA members. She wrote to the poll panel about her appointment as party chief on March 10. TNN

## BDA launches 6 housing projects

BDA has launched six new housing projects across Bengaluru, adding 4,251 flats worth Rs 3,200 crore in Konadasapura, Electronics City, Valagerahalli, Kalathammanahalli, and Kenchanapura. With vertical apartments preferred over plotted layouts to accommodate population growth, ongoing construction is attracting strong demand. P 3

## Haridwar plans meat-sale ban

Haridwar municipal corporation is gearing up to place a proposal in its board meeting this month to ban the sale of raw meat across the entire municipal area and shift all such shops to Sarai village on the city's outskirts ahead of the 2027 Ardh Kumbh. TNN

## Rly stns may move out of tiger reserve

Three railway lines and two stations, Hehegara and Chhipadohar, that come under the core area of Palamu Tiger Reserve in Jharkhand could be relocated. The move would minimise risk to wildlife and help speed up trains. Up to 125 trains travel on these lines daily. TNN

# Trump says may exit Iran war soon, threatens to quit Nato

### Ahead Of National Address, Says Will Be 'Out Quickly'

The United States will end its war on Iran fairly soon and could return for "spot hits" if needed, President Donald Trump said Wednesday, hours before he was scheduled to make a primetime address to the nation.

Trump also said he would state in the speech, which is due at 9pm EDT (6.30am, Thursday IST), that he was considering withdrawing the US from the Nato alliance.

▶ FULL COVERAGE: P 5, 6, 14, 16

Asked when the United States would consider the Iran war over, Trump said: "I can't tell you exactly... we're going to be out pretty quickly."

US action had ensured Iran would not have nuclear arms, he said: "They won't have a nuclear weapon because they are incapable of that now, and then I'll leave, and I'll take everybody with me, and if we have to we'll come back to do spot hits."

Global oil supplies were expected to be hit twice as hard this month as in March, the International Energy Agency said on Wednesday, underlining the need for an end to the conflict Trump began with Israel on Feb 28.

Trump said on social media that Iran had asked for a ceasefire but that he wouldn't consider it until Tehran ceased blocking the Strait of Hormuz, a key fuel shipment route. Iran denied making any such request.

In Tehran, thousands gathered for the funeral of the Revolutionary Guards' naval commander, killed in an Israeli strike, with mourners vowing to fight to the end despite tough talk from Washington. The procession took place on the 47th anniversary of Islamic republic, proclaimed on April 1, 1979, after the revolution that overthrew the last shah and ended over 2,500 years of monarchy. AGENCIES

▶ Euro-Atlantic security, P 16

### IRAN DENIES ITS PREZ SOUGHT A CEASEFIRE

- Tehran terms Trump remarks claiming that Iran's president has asked for a ceasefire as 'false and baseless'
- Aircraft carrier **USS George H W Bush** slated to go to West Asia along with three destroyers with a strike group of over 6,000 sailors
- Qatar says **oil tanker** leased to state-owned QatarEnergy **hit by Iranian cruise missile.** Blazes reported in Bahrain, Kuwait
- **2 more India-bound LPG carriers** with 94,000 MT have crossed Hormuz, says govt
- **Crude slides below $100** in volatile session, with US traders focused on whether Trump will declare end to war
- Starmer says **UK will host 35-nation meet** this week for plan to **reopen Strait of Hormuz.** UAE prepares to help US, allies open Hormuz by force

Photo: AP

A girl is comforted by her father and Israeli soldiers as they take cover in a bomb shelter

> 'We can see the finish line (in Iran war). It's not today, it's not tomorrow, but it is coming' —Marco Rubio, US SECRETARY OF STATE

# Ghosh who baulks: PIO has key role in anti-Trump case

### Don 1st Sitting US Prez To Attend SC Argument

**Chidanand Rajghatta** | TNN

**Washington:** As US Supreme Court began to hear arguments on Wednesday in the birthright citizenship case Trump vs Barbara, one of the most influential figures shaping the legal battlefield is also among its least publicly known : Indian-American attorney Smita Ghosh, senior appellate counsel at Constitutional Accountability Center.

President Trump attended the hearing, the first sitting president to do so, according to Clare Cushman, resident historian at Supreme Court Historical Society.

Critics saw Trump's appearance as a bid to intimidate the nine judges. But it didn't stop the justices from posing tough questions about the legality of his directive to restrict birthright citizenship.

Ghosh has emerged as an architect behind the defence of the 14th Amendment to the US Constitution. Her work is expected to play a role in how the justices approach a case that could redefine the meaning of US citizenship.

Unlike many high-profile SC advocates, Ghosh has maintained a low profile. There are no widely circulated interviews, no accounts of her upbringing with her birthplace not disclosed in resumes, and little biographical detail beyond her academic pedigree: Swarthmore College, followed by a law degree and a doctorate in American history from the University of Pennsylvania. That dual training — law and history — has become the hallmark of her legal strategy.

▶ Historical context, P 16

### A MATTER OF BIRTHRIGHT

- US birthright citizenship refers to the principle that **anyone born on US soil becomes a citizen,** from the 14th Amendment of the Constitution, adopted in 1868
- US Supreme Court is hearing Trump admin's appeal of a lower court's decision that blocked his executive order directing US agencies **not to recognise citizenship of children born in the US if neither parent is an American citizen or green card holder**

Smita Ghosh is one of the most influential figures shaping the high-profile Trump vs Barbara case

- The outcome could reshape US immigration policy, affect the **legal status of as many as 2.5 lakh babies born each year, and impact millions of migrant families,** including Indians on work visas

## In B'luru, LPG refills for autos capped at ₹200

Bengaluru autorickshaw drivers faced long queues and capped refills amid an ongoing auto LPG shortage, **with autos limited to Rs 200 and cars to Rs 500 refills.** Protests erupted near R T Nagar as drivers demanded adequate supply, while disputes and alleged overcharging at some outlets added to the chaos.

▶ PM assesses critical needs for people, P 6

Though the authorities intervened, some drivers alleged that a section of retailers were overcharging and collecting money indiscriminately for refills, with little or no regulatory action. Heated arguments between drivers and fuel station operators were also reported at multiple locations across the city. P 3

# ATF price up 25% after series of flip-flops; domestic flyers spared steep rise in fares

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

**New Delhi:** Domestic air travellers may have been spared steep airfare hikes for now as oil companies did not fully pass on the impact of higher crude prices, but international tickets for western destinations are likely to go up further after doubling from pre-war times as airlines take longer routes.

After a series of flip flops through Wednesday, govt limited the increase in aviation turbine fuel (ATF) base price for domestic flights to 25%, even as it warned of "interventions" if fares rise unreasonably. Jet fuel base price for international sectors has more than doubled over the last month.

The day had started with domestic and international ATF getting dearer by 115% and 107%, respectively. Within hours oil companies clarified that the hike for scheduled airlines was lower. By late afternoon, govt pegged the increase in base price at 25%.

By evening, IndiGo had revised the fuel surcharge it had introduced on March 13. Effective Thursday (April 2), only short domestic flights covering distances up to 1,000km will see a cut from the earlier Rs 425.

All other flights, from longer domestic ones to those going to the UK and EU, saw a rise of up to Rs 7,700. Earlier, domestic flights faced a flat surcharge of Rs 425, irrespective of distance flown.

Other airlines like Air India Group and Akasa could follow suit. To avoid charges of collusion, Indian carriers always stagger levy of and/or hike in fuel surcharge, which made a comeback last month.

"IATA's Jet Fuel Monitor indicates 130% increase in fuel prices for the region on a month-on-month comparison.... re-calibrated domestic fuel charge to vary by different travel distances.... without (govt limiting domestic ATF hike) increases would have impacted affordability of domestic air travel," IndiGo said.

▶ Govt closely watching, P 6

### Commercial LPG price up by over 10%

Price of commercial LPG cylinders rose by over 10% Wednesday, from Rs 1,883 to Rs 2,078, in New Delhi. IndianOil raised the price of 100-octane petrol and premium diesel by Rs 11 and Rs 1.5 per litre, respectively. P 5

## GST monthly kitty tops ₹2L cr first time post-revamp

GST collections rose 8.8% in March to cross the Rs 2 lakh crore mark for the first time since rates were lowered in Sept reforms. Latest data showed collections from domestic sources, based on transactions in Feb, went up nearly 6% to Rs 1,46,202 crore. The kitty based on imports expanded nearly 18% to Rs 53,861 crore, pointing to the impact of higher gold and silver imports, amid hardening of global oil prices towards the Feb-end due to the Gulf crisis.

▶ Sensex rallies 1,187 pts on West Asia peace hopes, P 13

While there may be some impact of the war on next month's collections, some of that may be offset by year-end sales rush as firms step up dispatches in March to meet their sales targets. P 13

# Govt buildings in B'luru among biggest defaulters, owe ₹473cr in service tax

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

**Bengaluru:** Govt buildings in Bengaluru have emerged among the city's biggest service tax defaulters, collectively owing nearly Rs 472.7 crore in unpaid charges, sparking sharp criticism over selective enforcement of tax collection by civic authorities.

Disclosing this, N R Ramesh, the former opposition leader in the erstwhile BBMP council (now Greater Bengaluru Authority), said: "Before auctioning properties of middle and lower middle-class citizens over small tax dues, authorities must act against these govt buildings that owe nearly Rs 473 crore. Why is there no action against these major defaulters?"

Senior GBA officials preferring anonymity confirmed the quantum of service charges due from govt buildings, as disclosed by Ramesh, is true.

▶ To recover dues, P 3

### EAST ZONE TOPS LIST

- At ₹246cr, **East zone accounts for highest arrears,** followed by Yelahanka (₹67.5cr), RR Nagar (₹57.5cr), Mahadevapura (₹39.1cr) and South zone (₹33.7cr)
- Data shows **key administrative buildings, including Vidhana Soudha and Raj Bhavan,** account for over ₹14cr in pending dues
- **GBA chief commissioner Maheshwar Rao** says "the matter is being examined, and **appropriate steps will be taken to ensure recovery"**

# SC: Judicial officers will decide 60 lakh Bengal claims by Apr 7, 47.3L completed

**Dhananjay.Mahapatra** @timesofindia.com

**New Delhi:** Contrary to West Bengal govt's apprehensions that scrutiny of deleted voters' claims for inclusion in voters' lists would not be completed before filing of nominations for assembly elections later this month, Supreme Court on Wednesday said the Calcutta HC chief justice has informed that all 60 lakh-odd claims would be adjudicated by April 7.

A bench of CJI Surya Kant and Justices Joymalya Bagchi and Vipul M Pancholi said the Calcutta HC CJ has informed that out of 60,06,675 objections to deletion of names from voters' lists, judicial officers — 500 from Bengal and another 200 from Odisha and Jharkhand — have decided 47,30,000 by Wednesday morning.

▶ Bengal CEO office turns fortress after protest, P 15

"Calcutta HC CJ has informed us that the pending objections are likely to be adjudicated by April 7. Keeping the aforesaid date in mind, post these matters on April 6 (for further hearing)," the bench said.

To appeal against the decisions of judicial officers, who were entrusted the task of electoral registration officers by SC using its extraordinary powers under Article 142 in the face of the state govt expressing serious doubts about the fairness of the process adopted by EC officials, SC had directed constitution of election tribunals. Nineteen such tribunals, comprising former HC CJs and former HC judges, have been notified by EC.

The bench said the appellate tribunals will have the discretion "to revisit the full records, including the reasons assigned by judicial officers while adjudicating objections, before deciding appeals filed before them, and also to inform the parties of these reasons".

▶ Own procedures, P 10

### IN THE COURTS

- HC **restrains tree-felling in Haryana** without its permission, expresses shock over low forest cover | P 6
- An **SC judge-led bench appoints nearly 400 amici curiae (friend of court)** to speed up hearings | P 10
- A **widow can claim maintenance from father-in-law,** says high court | P 5
- An Agra court sentences to death a man, 2 sons for **murder of daughter-in-law** and companion | P 5
- Talaq effective from **date husband pronounces it,** says Allahabad HC | P 5

### TEA BREAK AMID POLL RALLIES

IANS

PM Narendra Modi with tea garden workers in Dibrugarh, Assam, on Wednesday. After the tea garden tour, the PM posted on X, 'Tea is the soul of Assam! The tea from here has made its way across the world. It was a very memorable experience.' During the day, Modi launched BJP's poll campaign in Assam and predicted a 'hat-trick' for his party, with people's blessings. Asserting that Congress would achieve a 'century of defeats' in the upcoming elections, Modi also accused it of planning to bring a law to protect infiltrators if it comes to office, but said BJP and its allies would not allow this | Full report, P 15

## Ex-women cricketers in Karnataka to get ₹15k pension every month

**Manuja.Veerappa** @timesofindia.com

**Bengaluru:** In a long-pending move, Karnataka State Cricket Association (KSCA) will hand out Rs 15,000 every month to all eligible former women cricketers on par with their male counterparts.

To be eligible, the players must have represented Karnataka in the senior women's national championship and must be at least 55 years old as of April 1, 2026. Those already receiving a pension under BCCI scheme are not eligible.

While several state associations — including Gujarat, Vidarbha, West Bengal, Baroda and Rajasthan — already offer pensions to women cricketers not covered under the BCCI scheme, Karnataka had so far extended such benefits only to the male players. In a communication on Wednesday, KSCA outlined the eligibility criteria and application process. Association secretary Santosh Menon told **TOI** the initiative was part of a broader commitment.

▶ Form of recognition, P 18

### WHO MAKES THE CUT

- **Must have represented Karnataka** in the senior women's nat'l championship
- Should be **55 years or older** as of April 1, 2026
- Must **not be receiving a similar benefit** under BCCI pension scheme
- Eligible players **must submit relevant documents** and details of number of matches played

## *Ravi Varma's 'Yashoda & Krishna' fetches record-shattering ₹167 crore*

**Neelam.Raaj** @timesofindia.com

For the Indian art market, a big shot in the arm has come from Cyrus S Poonawalla, industrialist and founder of Serum Institute of India. His landmark price for Raja Ravi Varma's painting Yashoda and Krishna has made it the most expensive work of modern Indian art ever sold at auction, fetching Rs 167.2 crore ($18 million approx) at a Saffronart sale that closed to loud applause after an intense bidding war.

This price eclipses the previous record held by M F Husain's Untitled (Gram Yatra), which sold for over Rs 118 crore last year to Delhi-based collector Kiran Nadar.

Ravi Varma's painting carried a pre-sale estimate of ₹80cr-₹120 cr

Poonawalla called the acquisition both a privilege and a responsibility. "This national treasure deserves to be made available for public viewing periodically," he said, "and it will be my endeavour to facilitate this going forward."

Born in 1848 into an aristocratic family in the princely state of Travancore, Varma is best known for his fusion of European technique with an Indian sensibility.

Beyond the canvas, he set up a lithographic press in 1894 to mass-produce his paintings as affordable prints, bringing Hindu iconography into the homes of ordinary Indians for the first time. His images of the gods remain so embedded in popular consciousness that they still shape how millions of Indians picture their deities today.

▶ Timeless value, P 9

## ₹31cr auction at inaugural Jain premier league

A cricket league built around the Jain community just produced auction numbers that wouldn't look out of place in mainstream sport — 12 teams, over 50 bidders and a combined auction value of Rs 31 crore, **reports Parag Dave.** The Jain International Trade Organisation-backed JITO Premier League's inaugural franchise auction had all the jazz of a fiercely competitive IPL-style gavel event, with the stakes set high from the get-go.

Mumbai Sobo Star went for Rs 3.7 crore in the glitzy auction, followed by **Bengaluru at Rs 3.2 crore.** A Surat businessman picked up the Gujarat JPL team for Rs 2.4 crore. P 5

# Monkey keeps vigil by Channapatna woman's body in poignant 'farewell'

**Rajiv.Kalkod**@timesofindia.com

**Bengaluru:** In the quiet village of Rayara Doddi in Channapatna taluk, Bengaluru South district, a bond that transcended species left a community in tears this week, after a monkey sat beside 85-year-old V Parvatamma's body, appearing to grieve and refusing to leave. Video clips of this unusual sight soon went viral on social media.

Parvatamma, who died of a heart attack Monday, had long been known for feeding a troop of monkeys that strayed into the village from a nearby Anjaneya Temple. When her body was kept at home for people to pay their last respects, one of the monkeys arrived and stayed through the night.

Family members of Parvatamma said the monkey sat next to her body and refused to leave

"It climbed beside my mother's body and hugged her. It looked like it was weeping," her daughter Premamma told **TOI**, recalling how the animal remained unmoved even as the crowds gathered. "Someone offered it a banana around midnight. It ate it and came back to be by my mother's side."

The 'vigil' continued until daybreak, when the family, needing to proceed with the cremation, called in a snake catcher to safely remove the animal. The monkey was later released near the temple.

Belonging to a farming family, Parvatamma often visited the temple with her husband Venkataiah, feeding monkeys during her visits. Even after his death in 2010 and her move to live with Premamma near Channapatna, she would return to the village and the temple time and again, though age eventually limited her visits. "Though she generally feared animals, she made an exception for these monkeys," Premamma said.

## Green bags case: HC setback for Rohini Sindhuri

Karnataka high court has directed the chief secretary to grant approval under Prevention of Corruption Act to prosecute senior IAS officer Rohini Sindhuri in alleged eco-friendly bags procurement case, **reports Vasantha Kumar.** Sindhuri was deputy commissioner of Mysuru at that time. The petitioner — a lawyer and activist — has alleged a Rs 7.5-crore loss was caused to the state govt in the purchase of bags in 2021 for various local bodies in Mysuru district as part of a solid waste management project by paying Rs 52 per bag against Rs 13, the prevailing market rate. P 3

▶ Inquiry against vehicle inspector in Lambo case, P 3

Bangalore Times

UNAUTHORISED SONG USE:

# Delhi HC orders ₹25 lakh penalty in Rakshit Shetty copyright case

Claim of ownership hymns is false!

Court rejects 'minimal usage' argument

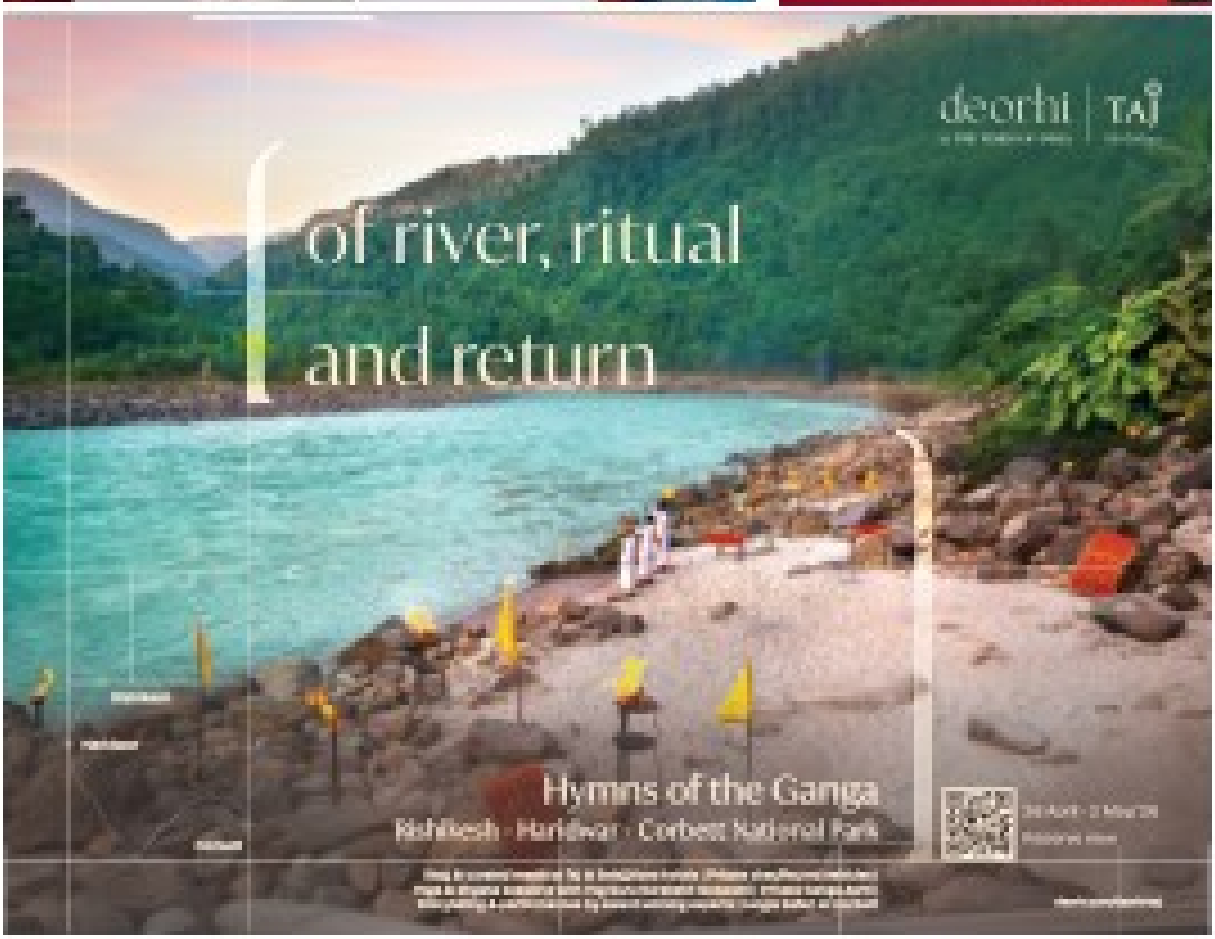
Earlier order and contempt finding

TOTAL FINANCIAL PENALTIES LEVIED ₹20

₹5

# How a rural creator critique turned into class conversation

Talk of the town



INFRA ALERT: BENEATH DREAM PINK METRO, CRATER-RIDDEN ROAD & CLOUDS OF DUST

# With only ₹12-cr budget, it's long road to recovery for Bannerghatta stretch

Vindhya Pabolu & Hamsaveni N | TNN

**Bengaluru:** While a ride on soon-to-open Metro promises to be a cruise from Jayadeva Hospital towards Bannerghatta affording a sweeping view of verdant patches dotted with lakes and highrises, the road below is a picture of contrast. Clouds of dust, an apology of a road, and blasts of basalt.

The 6.3km stretch of road —from Jayadeva Hospital to Royal Meenakshi Mall — has turned into a commuter nightmare. The situation worsened after multiple rounds of work by BWSSB and BMRCL, as the road was dug up repeatedly and poorly restored.

A civic official said they are trying to rebuild the road with a budget of Rs 12 crore. The actual requirement is upwards of Rs 60 crore.

A reality check by **TOI** showed the stretch from Jayadeva Hospital is manageable, but a drive from IIM-Bangalore campus is better not undertaken. Thick layers of dust hanging thick and low, half-dug road filled with basalt welcome two-wheelers with unfailing regularity. A recipe for accidents..

The stretch sees vehicles crawling from multiple directions, including JP Nagar, Hulimavu, BTM Layout and even from Electronics City, as vehicles funnel into Bannerghatta Road on their way towards MG Road. Residents say the congestion is worsened by poor road surface quality and drainage issues.

Syed Asif

**ONE HELL OF A RIDE:** The 6.3km stretch of road from Jayadeva Hospital to Royal Meenakshi Mall has turned into a nightmare for commuters after it was dug multiple times for work by BWSSB and BMRCL

With Namma Metro's Pink Line closer to launch, commuters complain of poor visibility. Residents said incidents like pedestrians trying to dodge an open drain accidentally dropping their belongings and falling have become common experiences.

Srikanth A, a 25-year-old who travels from Royal Meenakshi Mall to Jayanagar, said escaping an accident is a near miracle. "It's hard to understand why it has been left like this for so long."

A senior engineer from Bengaluru South City Corporation said BMRCL was expected to restore the road. The job has now vested with the corporation. With the current allocation of Rs 12 crore, officials admit only basic asphalting can be taken up. The corporation is now exploring additional funding avenues, including a proposal to secure Rs 30 crore from Greater Bengaluru Authority.

Officials say the final goal is to rebuild the road comprehensively, including shifting utilities underground and developing proper footpaths. An engineer said BWSSB work is nearing completion.

## COMMUTERS COMPLAIN: IT'S A DEATH TRAP

"I have been commuting to my office in Domlur on a two-wheeler for three years. The stretch is dusty due to incomplete roads. Visibility drops often. Stretch near IIMB Metro station has worsened in the past two months
**Arushi Singh** | 23, GOTTIGERE RESIDENT

"The stretch is in a terrible condition with numerous potholes. During rain, one can't tell where potholes, stones or concrete chunks are. It feels almost like a death trap at times
**Yukthi** | 22, COMMUTER

"After Jayadeva Junction, going towards Vega City, the road turns into a full-blown nightmare. For two-wheeler riders, it's a complete smoke show. As I commute from BTM Layout towards MG Road and Bannerghatta, I'm stuck between traffic chaos and pothole adventures
**Srikant Parthasarathy** | ADVOCATE, BTM LAYOUT RESIDENT

"If I have to go towards JP Nagar, I need to cross Bannerghatta Road, and the stretch from Gottigere to Vega City is the worst. The road conditions here don't match the standard of living at all. I have never seen such dangerous potholes, broken stretches and poorly laid tar. During rains, it turns into a nightmare
**Snehasis Das** | 54, RESIDENT OF BEGUR ROAD

# Bescom staff on midnight duty assaulted

**Bengaluru**: A routine midnight repair call turned violent for Bescom staff in Thyagarajanagar Sunday when they were assaulted while parked on the roadside to collect equipment.

## ROADSIDE PARKING

According to a complaint by lineman Basavaraj S Dinni of Bescom unit-2, the incident occurred at 1am after he received a call about a snapped electric wire near Muneshwara temple. Dinni, with colleague Kiran Tarase and driver Prakash, first assessed the damage and then returned to the office to collect a ladder, wires, and other equipment.

As they parked their van on the roadside, two men on a scooter allegedly abused them and questioned the vehicle's placement. The confrontation escalated when one attacker struck Dinni in the right eye with a stone while the other assaulted him from behind. Tarase and Prakash were also attacked. The assailants then fled, issuing death threats.

The staffers noted the scooter number as KA-05-KN-8585, approached Banashankari police. They underwent treatment at Victoria Hospital. TNN

## ALMANAC (2.4.2026)

Meena Masa 19 Shri Parabhava Nama Samvatsara – Uttarayana – Vasantha Ritu - Tithi: Chaitra Sukla Purnima h. 7-42 Nakshatra: Hasta h. 17-39 Yoga: Dhruva h. 14-20. 13 Shawwal
Kali Day 1872667
**Rahu Kalam 1.30-3pm**
— KL Vidya Shankara Somayaji

# Convict jumps parole, caught 20 days later

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

**Bengaluru:** A 40-year-old murder convict, M Ramakrishna, who had jumped emergency parole and had gone incommunicado, landed in police custody earlier this week.

Ramakrishna had walked out of Bengaluru Central Prison on Dec 11, 2025, after the high court directed prison authorities to grant him 90-day parole.

## HIDING IN KADUR

However, he failed to return to prison on the scheduled date of March 10, prompting officials to lodge a complaint with Parappana Agrahara police.

M Narayana, deputy commissioner of police (Electronics City), said a special team was formed to trace the fugitive. One of the main challenges was that Ramakrishna was not carrying a mobile phone or using any debit or credit cards, leaving investigators with little digital trail to follow.

### Call to son helped catch the convict

"Ramakrishna is from Kyatasandra in Tumakuru. One team visited his family, who said he had stayed with them during his parole and left home on the morning of March 10, claiming he was returning to prison. We checked CCTV footage at the Kyatasandra bus stand and other locations along the highway, but unfortunately lost his trail as there was no clear footage of his movements," Narayana said.

Meanwhile, police kept a close watch on the movements of the fugitive's family, particularly his elder son.

"One day, we found that his son had received a call on his mobile phone from a coin-operated telephone booth at the KSRTC bus stand in Kadur (Chikkamagaluru). Treating this as a crucial lead, we rushed to the spot and examined CCTV footage. In hazy visuals, we noticed a man in a saffron robe loitering near the telephone booth," Narayana further said.

### Disguised in saffron robe, was living in hotel

A plain-clothes team was immediately dispatched to Kadur, where they checked local lodges.

They discovered that a man dressed in saffron robes had checked into a small hotel on a daily rent of Rs 100. When the police team reached the hotel, the suspect was out.

He was apprehended upon his return and, during questioning, confessed to being Ramakrishna, the officer added.

### Found guilty in 2021 for murder

Police records show that **Ramakrishna** and his female friend were arrested by Tumakuru police in 2017, on charges of killing the latter's husband. Later, in 2021, they were convicted to life imprisonment.

# Tough action on trash: BSWML warns of ₹5L penalty

Nithya.Mandyam
@timesofindia.com

**Bengaluru**: In a renewed push to enforce waste management norms, Bengaluru Solid Waste Management Ltd (BSWML) has intensified action against plastic use and violations of waste segregation rules, warning that penalties for repeat offences can go up to Rs 5 lakh.

As part of the drive, authorities will closely monitor weddings, large gatherings, banquet halls and convention centres, where the use of single-use plastic items like plates, spoons, non-woven polypropylene (NWPP) bags, flex and plastic sheets remains prevalent. Surprise inspections and raids will be carried out, and violators will face immediate fines.

Under the existing framework, initial violations for plastic use at events can attract penalties of up to Rs 3,500, escalating sharply for repeat offences. Waste segregation has also been made strictly mandatory, with penalties imposed on households, bulk waste generators and those dumping garbage in vacant sites.

Households failing to segregate waste will face fines starting at Rs 500 for the first offence and Rs 1,000 for subsequent violations. Dumping waste in vacant plots can attract Rs 25,000 initially and Rs 50,000 thereafter, while bulk waste generators face fines ranging from Rs 10,000 to Rs 25,000. Persistent violations across categories can lead to penalties up to Rs 5 lakh.

In a parallel move, BSWML has introduced a graded penalty structure for violations at events, linking fines to the size of gatherings. Organisers conducting events without permission will face penalties starting from Rs 2,500 for gatherings of up to 5,000 people, rising to Rs 50,000 for events exceeding 25,000 people.

Violations involving use of banned items will attract fines ranging from Rs 3,500 to Rs 50,000.

BSWML CEO Karigowda said, "These fines are not new —they already exist under the Solid Waste Management rules. What we are doing now is ensuring strict enforcement on the ground. There will be zero tolerance, especially at large public events and among bulk waste generators."

Pic for representation

**EVENTS UNDER SCANNER**

**PENALTY BASED ON NO. OF PEOPLE AT EVENT (IN ₹)**

| People | <5,000 | 5,001-10,000 | 10,001-25,000 | >25,000 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Carrying out event without permission | 2,500 | 5,000 | 10,000 | 50,000 |
| Plastic & NWPP bags | 3,500 | 7,000 | 25,000 | 50,000 |
| Plastic, thermocol for serving food & beverages | 3,500 | 7,000 | 25,000 | 50,000 |
| Use of flex, plastic sheets, etc | 3,500 | 7,000 | 25,000 | 50,000 |

**STRICT MEASURES:** Authorities will closely monitor weddings, large gatherings, banquet halls and convention centres, where the use of single-use plastic like spoons and flex remains prevalent

# KARAGA JATRE TO ENTER CITY BYLANES

Muthu P, IANS

**TRADITION TO THE FORE:** Devotees lit camphor outside the Dharmaraya Swamy Temple at Thigalarapete in central Bengaluru Wednesday night during the historic Bengaluru Karaga, one of the city's most vibrant cultural traditions in honour of goddess Draupadi. Jnanendra, the karaga-carrying priest, entered the temple premises with devotees after performing a series of rituals ahead of the grand procession, marking the culmination of the nine-day Shaktiyotsava festival

# Aadhaar error: Woman wrongly declared dead runs pillar to post

An administrative error has left a woman in Hosapete struggling to prove she is alive after she was officially recorded as 'deceased' in Aadhaar-linked govt records.

The error has effectively erased N Hampamma, 44, of Dharmasagar village, from govt databases.

Officials said the other woman from the same locality, who shared the same name, died at the age of 48, in 2024. During the registration of the death, authorities allegedly failed to verify identity details and mistakenly tagged Hampamma's Aadhaar number to the deceased person's record.

"As a result, all welfare benefits linked to my Aadhaar have been halted, including financial assistance under the Gruhalakshmi scheme, ration supplies. My eligibility for housing and agricultural schemes has also been affected," she said. She has been running from pillar to post for over a year to get it rectified, but in vain. TNN

# IL govt teachers get ready for bilingual teaching

SruthySusan.Ullas
@timesofindia.com

**Bengaluru:** The Karnataka school education department has begun teacher training process for bilingual classrooms, where both Kannada and English are used to impart education. More than 27,000 schools are set to get bilingual sections from the next academic year. Over 1 lakh teachers are to be trained for the process, including 45,000 teachers from the new 27,000 sections.

The education department is converting all govt schools in 15 districts — Bengaluru North, Bengaluru South, Bengaluru Rural, Ramanagara, Haveri, Kalaburagi, Shivamogga, Hassan, Tumakuru, Dakshina Kannada, Kolar, Koppal, Dharwad, Vijayapura and Bagalkot — into monograde bilingual classrooms, replacing the earlier Nali-Kali system. This is in addition to all the Karnataka Public Schools and PM Shri schools, pre-primary schools and a few mining-affected taluks, that will also get bilingual classrooms.

There are 9,000 bilingual sections in the state till now. Bilingual sections were started by former chief minister HD Kumaraswamy in 2019-20. Since then, every year, a few hundred schools get bilingual sections, where classes are taught in both Kannada and English. After Class 5, students can choose between English and Kannada. The first batch of students will reach Class 8 next academic year.

However, this time, the number of schools that will be converted is vast, making the task humongous. "This training will be done at three levels — state, district and at taluk level. At the state level, a two-day orientation programme for nearly 400 state resource persons was provided. SRPs are training master resource persons — 15 from each taluk — through a five-day training programme at the district level. A massive teacher training will be conducted at the taluk level," said an official.

The training would include five-day intense training with follow-ups during vacation. The training will include familiarising with the bilingual curriculum and textbooks, building their English language proficiency and enhancing their teaching/pedagogical skills among teachers.

"The teachers will be trained in how to deliver the lessons in both languages. Given that most of the teachers can read and write English, it will not be hard," said Vikas Kishore Suralkar, commissioner, department of school education and literacy. However, experts caution against challenges which come with these large initiatives. "Monitoring and quality assurance will be a task when such large-scale initiatives are implemented. Moreover, five days of training is too short to remove teachers' fears and build confidence in using English. Regular follow-up sessions, teacher mentoring and more practice-oriented trainings are necessary," said an academician, who did not want to be identified.

Translating training into classroom practice is a big challenge. Teachers may struggle to understand and apply concepts of bilingual approach and may resort to traditional methods of teaching. They may not internalise the philosophy, principles and practices of a bilingual means of education, he added.

"Many teachers in rural areas struggle to read and understand texts in English. A five-day training will be a good beginning, but it will hardly suffice. Teachers will at least go through the textbooks, start preparing their lessons and plan activities during free time. But more practice is needed to build their confidence," said a govt schoolteacher.

"When bilingual classrooms were launched in 2019, teachers were put through a two-week training followed by several round-the-year training sessions. Before jumping into another massive exercise, it might help to review and reflect the impact of the previous training," said another teacher.

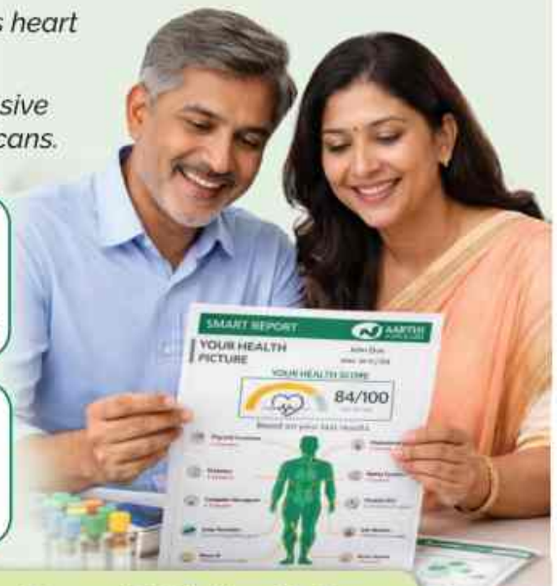
**DUAL LANGUAGE IN CLASSROOMS**

| District | Total Schools | Total Teachers |
|---|---|---|
| Bagalkot | 1,977 | 3,564 |
| Bengaluru Rural | 1,371 | 1,959 |
| Bengaluru Urban North | 707 | 1,588 |
| Bengaluru Urban South | 1,204 | 2,380 |
| Dakshina Kannada | 1,282 | 1,541 |
| Dharwad | 1,229 | 2,666 |
| Hassan | 2,962 | 4,272 |
| Haveri | 1,771 | 3,348 |
| Kalaburagi | 2,300 | 3,798 |
| Kolar | 2,226 | 3,476 |
| Koppal | 1,223 | 2,207 |
| Ramanagara | 1,328 | 1,778 |
| Shivamogga | 2,542 | 3,905 |
| Tumakuru | 2,591 | 3,955 |
| Vijayapura | 2,709 | 5,437 |

Total 27,422 | Total 45,874


YOUR HEALTH CHECKUP IS INCOMPLETE !

› Blood tests alone miss heart & lung risks.
› Get a truly comprehensive checkup with Aarthi Scans.



LUNGS Chest X-Ray
HEART ECG & ECHO
ABDOMEN Ultrasound
BLOOD 80+ Tests
FREE Smart Report With Health Score

JANA SEVA PLUS
85 Tests | Basic Checkup
Ultrasound Scan, X-Ray, Chest, ECG
80+ Blood Tests (Diabetes,Thyroid, Liver, Kidney, CBC, Cholesterol, Profiles)
~~₹4250~~ ₹1699
60% OFF

JANA SEVA GOLD
93 Tests | Advanced Checkup
All Tests in JANA SEVA PLUS
+
CT Calcium Screening or ECHO Scan (Heart Attack Risk)
Cancer Screening (Prostate, Ovaries, Colon, Liver, Pancreas)
Vitamin B12 / Vitamin D
~~₹14250~~ ₹4999
FREE HOME BLOOD COLLECTION AVAILABLE
65% OFF

WHY CHOOSE AARTHI SCANS & LABS?
38 Years of Trust
12 States & 250+ Branches
7 Radiologists From One Family For Expert Reports
NABL Accredited
aarthiscan.com
70224 70224
Trusted by 1.7 crore+ Indians

16 Branches in Bengaluru
Jaya Nagar, Indira Nagar, Rajajinagar, Koramangala, Padmanabha Nagar, Marathahalli, JP Nagar, K.R. Puram, Hebbal, Nagarabhavi, Hennur, Shivaji Nagar, Whitefield, Hulimavu, Yelahanka, Jalahalli Cross

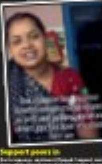
AARTHI SCANS & LABS
Ethical & Affordable Diagnostics

BENGALURU CHENNAI NEW DELHI MUMBAI HYDERABAD KOLKATA GURUGRAM FARIDABAD PUNE AHMEDABAD TRIVANDRUM PONDICHERRY

*The most precious commodity any leader possesses is authenticity* - Marcus Buckingham

# Too real or an 'Industry plant'? The Pujarini Pradhan debate online

Talk of the town



## The clap back

## Support pours in

## 'Industry plant' tag

Believe it or not!

# This man built a country because he was bored

## Laws, laughs & a fashion

## SOLUTIONS TO GAMES/PUZZLES

# Skyward push: 4.2k flats in pipeline as BDA prioritises vertical housing

Vindhya.Pabolu
@timesofindia.com

**Bengaluru:** In a move to prioritise apartments over large plotted layouts, Bangalore Development Authority (BDA) has taken up six new housing projects across the city, proposing 4,251 flats as part of its latest push to expand residential infrastructure.

The projects, worth Rs 3,200 crore and spread across Konadasapura, Electronics City, Valagerahalli, Kalathammanahalli, and Kenchanapura, include 1BHK to 4BHK units and are currently under construction, with basic infrastructure such as roads, drainage, and power supply.

Among the largest upcoming projects is Konadasapura Phase 1 housing scheme in Bidarahalli hobli, where 1,928 flats — 480 2BHK and 1,448 3BHK units — are being developed at an estimated cost of Rs 713.5 crore.

In Konadasapura Phase 3, BDA plans to build 532 flats (2BHK, 3BHK, and 3.5BHK units). A commercial complex is also planned in the same phase, featuring a cinema theatre, food court, and entertainment facilities, at an estimated cost of Rs 42.4 crore.

Many of the units are currently under construction, with completion set for the year-end. A senior BDA official said: "Under-construction phases are already seeing interest, including from the Army Welfare Housing Board, which has requested 300-400 flats. The reason for more apartment construction is that layouts are not sold directly, as public demand is oversubscribed; apartments are preferred for vertical growth, accommodating more families in limited space. The goal is to manage Bengaluru's population growth efficiently."

"There is a strong demand for apartments. We have also launched new projects with nearly 4,800 to 5,000 flats, and work has already begun. Going forward, we are focusing on vertical growth, much like cities such as Mumbai, as land availability is becoming a challenge with the city expanding rapidly. Bengaluru is one of the fastest-growing cities, and we see strong prospects in this segment

**NA Haris** | CHAIRMAN, BDA

### LAYOUT DEVELOPMENT IN FULL SWING

The authority is also continuing the development of major layouts in the city, with plans to expand K Shivaram Karanth Layout to 11 surrounding villages and Nadaprabhu Kempegowda Layout (NPKL) to 21 villages.

Shivaram Karanth Layout, in north Bengaluru, is being developed with roads, drains, water supply pipelines, underground drainage networks, and electrification.

At NPKL, which spans 12 villages in Yeshwantpur and Kengeri, BDA has spent Rs 3,811 crore so far. Of the 3,969 acres notified for acquisition, 2,963 acres were handed over to the engineering section, while about 970 acres remain to be acquired. Development work is progressing on 2,771 acres where more than 30,843 sites are being formed, along with 409 parks and playgrounds and 178 civic amenity sites.

In Arkavathy Layout, spread across 567 acres, authorities have formed 8,286 intermediate sites, most of which were already allotted. Road asphalting is under way, while water supply and underground drainage works are being executed by BWSSB, with officials stating that around 80% of drainage work and 90% of electrical work are completed. While allottees said they are yet to get water connections and other facilities like playgrounds, roads and drains, officials said the works are going on and will soon be completed.

### 10k flats sold

Besides its ongoing housing projects, BDA has completed 13,118 flats under 30 housing schemes, with at least 10,153 units already allotted. Authorities have also introduced an online system enabling applicants to select flats of their choice, aiming to make the allotment process more transparent and convenient.

According to BDA, 575 flats were sold from Aug 2025 to Feb 2026 in multiple locations, including Hunnigere, Kommaghatta, Kaniminike, and Gunjur.

These completed units complement the authority's broader efforts to expand affordable housing options across the city.

Recently, Canara Bank acquired 120 2BHK flats in the Kommaghatta apartments and requested an additional 120 3BHK units in the same complex.

Explaining the reason behind good sales, the official said: "Earlier, there was little transparency, accountability or public engagement, with communication largely one-way from BDA to citizens. Now we have a system that allows feedback and addresses queries and grievances. We ran extensive campaigns to clear inventory. Our studies showed that public awareness was low — many people didn't know flats or villas were available, and some assumed they were auctioned. There was also a perception issue due to earlier low-quality EWS (economically weaker section) construction, which discouraged mid-income buyers, and we addressed it."

# Fuel stations limit refills: ₹200 for autos, ₹500 for cars

**FUTURE TENSE:** Autos wait in long queues in front of fuel stations due to a severe LPG shortage

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

**Bengaluru:** A shortage of auto LPG continued to hit autorickshaw drivers in the city on Wednesday, with long queues at several stations, some stretching over a kilometre.

The disruption is not limited to Bengaluru, with drivers across the state facing similar issues.

Several outlets in the city imposed purchase limits, restricting autorickshaw refills to Rs 200, while cars were allowed up to Rs 500. The shortage sparked protests near RT Nagar on Devegowda Road, where drivers demonstrated demanding adequate supply. Police later intervened to disperse the crowd after parked autorickshaws blocked traffic. Heated arguments between drivers and fuel station operators were also reported at multiple locations.

**The shortage sparked protests near RT Nagar where drivers demonstrated demanding adequate supply. Heated arguments between drivers and fuel station operators were also reported at multiple locations. Drivers also alleged some retailers were overcharging**

Ravikumar, an autorickshaw driver, said: "Despite waiting for hours, we are unable to get LPG. At many stations, queues stretch for kilometres. We depend entirely on our autos for our livelihood and have no alternative source of income. How can we pay EMIs and meet daily expenses? Authorities must ensure proper supply of auto LPG."

Drivers also alleged that some retailers were overcharging and collecting money indiscriminately for refills, with little regulatory action.

"At govt-run oil companies outlet, LPG costs around Rs 79 per litre, but some private stations are charging between Rs 90 and Rs 120. No action is being taken against this overpricing," another autorickshaw driver said.

# Apex Bank is public authority, rules Information Commission

Vindhya.Pabolu
@timesofindia.com

**Bengaluru:** In a move to boost transparency in the cooperative banking sector, the Karnataka Information Commission (KIC) has ruled that the Karnataka State Cooperative Apex Bank qualifies as a public authority under the Right to Information Act, 2005.

The order passed on Feb 9 by a bench presided over by state information commissioner Rajashekara S came after a second appeal by a citizen seeking loan-related documents.

The saga began on May 9, 2024, when Hanamanth Vasant Shinde from Mudhol taluk, Bagalkot district, filed an application under the RTI Act. Shinde sought details from the bank regarding documents and explanatory notes submitted by Nirani Sugars Ltd for loans availed between March 2022 and June 2024.

However, in a reply dated May 21, 2024, the bank rejected the request, citing an earlier order of the commission and maintaining that it is not a "public authority" under the RTI Act. Shinde filed his first appeal before the registrar of cooperative societies. The registrar's office, however, returned the appeal, stating that the bank's president was the designated first appellate authority. Left with no remedy, Shinde approached the commission with a second appeal on Aug 12, 2024.

**KIC directed Apex Bank to appoint public information officers and first appellate authorities across its offices and ensure disclosure of information under the RTI Act**

In its defence, the Apex Bank argued that it is a cooperative society registered under the Karnataka Cooperative Societies Act, 1959, carrying out banking business for its members in accordance with its bylaws and regulatory directions. It contended that it is neither owned, controlled, nor substantially financed by the state govt, and therefore does not fall within the definition of a "public authority" under the RTI Act. The bank also relied on earlier high court rulings and the commission's orders to argue that such cooperative institutions are outside the RTI framework and that the appeal was not maintainable.

### Govt contributed to its share capital

The commission noted that the bank was established by the registrar of cooperative societies in his official capacity and later designated as the state cooperative bank. It found that the govt has contributed to its share capital and continues to exercise significant administrative and financial control. Senior officials, including the registrar, have powers to inspect records, order audits, and conduct inquiries into the bank's functioning. The bank's audited accounts are required to be placed before the state legislature, and its operations are guided by govt policies and directions.

It noted that govt nominees are part of the bank's management and that recent amendments to the Karnataka Cooperative Societies Act have also strengthened such oversight. The bank operates within a broader cooperative credit framework, extending loans through district central cooperative banks and primary agricultural credit societies, performing functions closely aligned with governmental objectives.

It concluded that there exists deep control of the state over the bank. It held that the bank qualifies both as a "state" under Article 12 of the Constitution and as a "public authority" under Section 2(h) of the RTI Act.

# EV tax plan a blow to middle class & green push: BJP

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

**Bengaluru:** The state govt's decision to impose a lifetime tax on electric cars has sparked political backlash, with the BJP alleging that the green mobility transition is being sacrificed for short-term revenue, while the middleclass aspiring to own affordable electric vehicles is being financially burdened.

State BJP president **BY Vijayendra** said Karnataka had built strong momentum in electric mobility through years of tax incentives, but the govt was now reversing course. Highlighting current global tensions in West Asia, he added that the focus should be on making EVs more accessible.

In the recent legislature session, the Karnataka Motor Vehicles Taxation (Amendment) Bill-2026, was passed. Electric cars priced up to Rs 10 lakh may attract a 5% tax, those in the Rs 10-25 lakh range 8%, while vehicles above Rs 25 lakh will continue to be taxed at 10%.

Vijayendra alleged the transport department was under pressure to raise revenues, sacrificing long-term green mobility goals for short-term gains.

## Russian feted for vachana translations

Basava Balagagala Okkoota Wednesday honoured **Galina Kopeliovich**, a Russian scholar who has translated the 12th-century 'vachanas' of Basavadi Sharanas into Russian with meanings, at Kuvempunagara in Mysuru.

Galina said she would translate more works like this in the future. TNN

# GBA chief promises steps to recover dues

▶ Continued from page 1

Across zones, the highest arrears are from the East Zone (Rs 246.4 crore), followed by Yelahanka (Rs 67.5 crore), Rajarajeshwari Nagar (Rs 57.5 crore), Mahadevapura (Rs 39.1 crore) and South Zone (Rs 33.7 crore).

Reacting to this latest revelation, GBA chief commissioner Maheshwar Rao said: "The matter is being examined, and appropriate steps will be taken to ensure recovery in accordance with the law."

Data highlights that key administrative centres — including Vidhana Soudha, Vikasa Soudha, Raj Bhavan, Kumarakrupa Guest House and a multistoreyed govt complex — cumulatively account for Rs 14.9 crore in pending dues, with non-payment reportedly continuing since 2008-09.

**If there is a genuine intent to improve the financial health of civic bodies, let them begin with govt establishments. The same law must apply to everyone**

**NR RAMESH,** Opposition leader, erstwhile BBMP

Ramesh alleged that while citizens with property tax dues as low as Rs 50,000 to Rs 5 lakh face property attachment and auction, large defaulters — including govt departments, tech parks and commercial establishments — are spared strict enforcement. Calling for accountability, Ramesh urged the civic body to issue legal notices and consider sealing or attaching govt properties to recover dues.

# *Eco-friendly bags scam: HC tells govt to approve prosecution of Rohini Sindhuri*

Vasantha.Kumar
@timesofindia.com

**Bengaluru:** The high court directed the chief secretary of the state to grant the necessary approval sought by petitioner NR Ravinchandre Gowda under Section 17A of the Prevention of Corruption Act to prosecute senior IAS officer **Rohini Sindhuri** in connection with the eco-friendly bags procurement case. Sindhuri was deputy commissioner of Mysuru at the relevant time.

Justice M Nagaprasanna, in his order, said: "Ordinarily, this court would have deemed it appropriate to remit the matter back to the govt for a fresh consideration. In the peculiar facts of the present case, such a course is both unnecessary and unwarranted. The coordinate bench had already issued a clear mandate to reconsider the matter in accordance with law. Yet, the govt, instead of undertaking a meaningful re-evaluation, chose to reiterate its earlier position, albeit with a little justification. In the circumstances, a further remand would serve no fruitful purpose and would only prolong the process to the detriment of justice."

The petitioner-complainant, a lawyer and social activist from Mysuru city, alleged that a Rs 7.5-crore loss was caused to the state govt in the purchase of eco-friendly bags in 2021 for various local bodies in Mysuru district as part of a solid waste management project by paying Rs 52 per bag from KHDC against Rs 13, the prevailing market rate. He filed a complaint before the Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB) seeking action against Sindhuri.

On Sept 19, 2022, state govt declined permission under Section 17A of the PC Act. Gowda challenged it in the high court, and on Feb 20, 2025, the court directed govt to consider the request afresh.

Thereafter, on May 26, 2025, govt again declined approval, citing the officer in question, Rohini Sindhuri, was exonerated in the departmental inquiry proceedings, forcing Gowda to approach the high court again.

Justice Nagaprasanna noted that "the spectre of corruption once raised, on the basis of material placed on record, cannot be summarily extinguished at the threshold. It must be allowed to unfold through the process of investigation, which alone can ascertain the truth," the judge added.

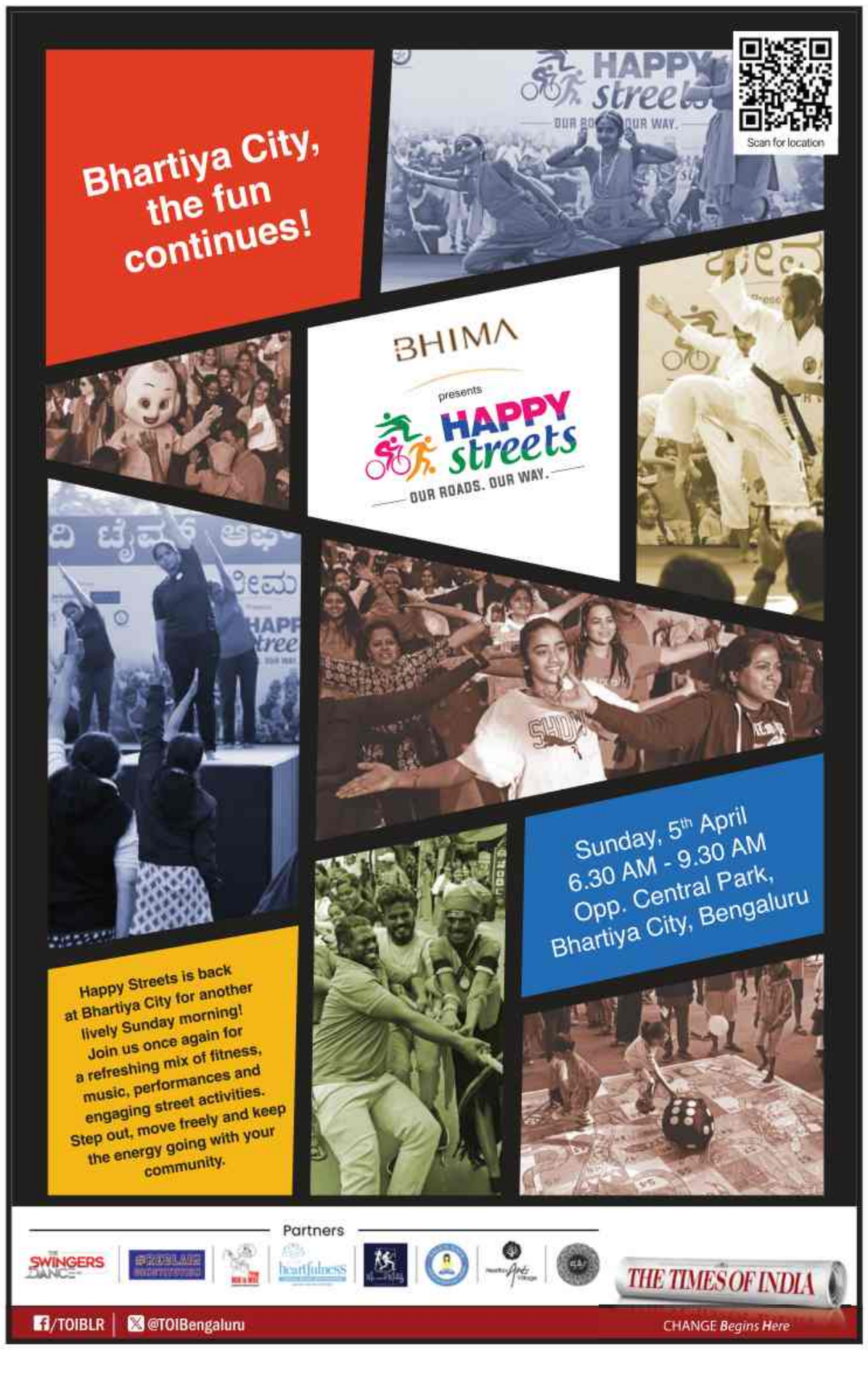
## Court orders departmental inquiry on vehicle inspector over Lambo seizure

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

**Bengaluru:** The high court has directed that a departmental inquiry ensue on the senior motor vehicle inspector of Bengaluru south for having acted in "disregard" of law in the Lamborghini Huracan car seizure case. The court has said that N Ranjith, by his actions, has committed what it termed as "legal hara-kiri.

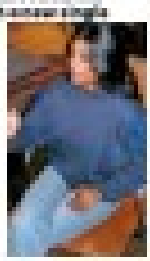
"The chronology of events reveals a startling inversion of the statutory scheme. The crime was registered on Feb 7, 2026, and the very next day, the senior motor vehicle inspector entered the petitioner's residence and took away the vehicle. It was only thereafter that a demand notice was sought to be issued. The sequence of actions by the officer left the procedure stipulated in law topsy-turvy. What emerged was a situation where no lawful demand was determined, no notice was served upon the petitioner calling upon him to make good the alleged deficit in tax and yet the most drastic measure, seizure of the vehicle, was resorted to, at the very threshold. A remedy that the statute contemplates, as a last resort, was, in the case at hand, deployed as the first," Justice M Nagaprasanna noted in his recent order.

"Although the officer has, in effect, committed a legal hara-kiri... the quashing of the crime will not operate as a licence to the petitioner to escape liability, if any, under law. Liberty is thus reserved to the state, to proceed afresh, strictly in accordance with law and with due observance to the procedural safeguards. Equally, the undertaking furnished by the state public prosecutor that those responsible for deletion of the records in the regional transport office shall be brought to book must be given full effect," the judge observed while quashing the proceedings against H1 Car Care Limited, Bengaluru, and also ordering return of the seized vehicle.



## WHAT'S #TRENDING AND WHY

### Simona Ashley announces her music debut with a new single

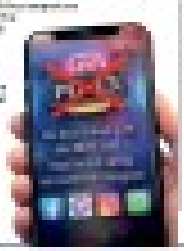


### Florence Pugh makes it Instar-official with Peaky Blind actor Finn Cole

### Kris Jenner is China's one of the most popular profile pics

### Italy announces new cuts to tackle overtourism in 2024

### Meta drops 'PG-13' label for Instagram teen accounts after MPA objection



### Tiger Woods' polo from DUI mugshot sold out after arrest

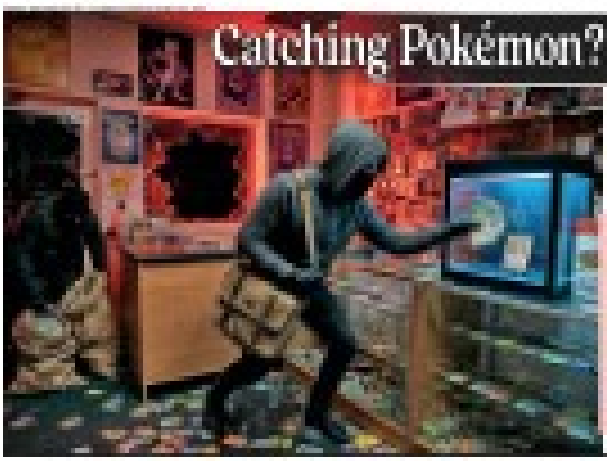
# 'Gold demand is on the rise despite global unrest'

India was a rapid in gold salary more taken for light jewellery

80-90%

### Buyers adapt to price shifts

# Catching Pokémon? £20K cards gone in one night



### Gotta catch 'em all ... quickly

### Rare cards, real problem

# CM camps in poll-bound districts as election battle turns personal

## Cong win may deepen tussle

TOI

**RAKED OVER...** Samarth Shamanur, Congress candidate in Davanagere South, walks on burning coals during the chariot festival at a temple in Halepet. He was following in the footsteps of his father and minister SS Malikarjun and grandfather Shamanur Shivashankarappa

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

**Bagalkot/Davanagere:** CM Siddaramaiah intensified Congress' campaign for the April 9 bypolls in Bagalkot and Davanagere South, unusually choosing to camp in the two districts instead of returning to Bengaluru.

Party sources say the CM had camped in Bagalkot for five days before moving to Davanagere South Wednesday, holding a series of rallies, roadshows and strategy meetings. He has been urging voters to back the party to ensure continuity of the govt's flagship guarantee schemes.

His decision to remain on the ground and closely track campaign momentum suggests results would be of personal importance. Congress brass is projecting these polls as a referendum on the govt's performance, even as Siddaramaiah faces a challenge from his deputy DK Shivakumar for the CM post.

Sources say the outcome could shape internal equations, with growing demands from Shivakumar's supporters for a change in CM. A strong showing is expected to strengthen Siddaramaiah's position.

Meanwhile, Shivakumar too has also stepped up efforts. After two days of campaigning in Assam, he returned to the state and launched an intensive campaign in both constituencies, holding meetings with party functionaries and workers to fine-tune strategy.

BJP has criticised Siddaramaiah's extended stay, with state president BY Vijayendra saying that if Siddaramaiah had confidence in the govt's development work and guarantee schemes, "there would have been no need to camp in Bagalkot for five days". He urged the govt to issue a white paper on the state's financial condition.

Vijayendra was confident BJP would win both seats, citing the hard work of its workers. He said Congress workers were "active only at night" and alleged public anger and dissatisfaction against the state govt.

**BV.Shivashankar**
@timesofindia.com

**Bengaluru**: Governing Congress faces a delicate situation ahead of the bypolls in Davanagere South and Bagalkot as a victory could intensify factional tension.

Supporters of chief minister Siddaramaiah, who are leading the campaign, are likely to claim credit if the party wins and could push for organisational changes. The camp is expected to back public works minister Satish Jarkiholi for the state president post — which deputy chief minister DK Shivakumar currently holds.

**DANCE OF DEMOCRACY**

Jarkiholi, who is handling the campaign in Bagalkot, has been seeking a larger role for some time now. He was credited for snatching Shiggaon seat from BJP in a bypoll last year, a seat previously represented by former CM Basavaraj Bommai.

Functionaries such as Saleem Ahmed and Rizwan Arshad are at the forefront of the campaign in Davanagere South, and could stake claim for ministerial berths if the party wins. They are seen as potential replacements for municipal administration minister Rahim Khan and housing minister BZ Zameer Ahmed Khan.

Besides Zameer, Siddaramaiah's political secretary Naseer Ahmed and MLC K Jabbar Khan have stayed away from active campaigning after the party denied a ticket to a Muslim candidate. Their absence has allowed Saleem and Rizwan to strengthen their positions.

"In a political set-up, brass rewards those who work hard and punishes anti-party activities," said HB Manjappa, president, Davanagere district unit. "We hope those who are staying away from campaign will join when electioneering peaks."

ANI

**FACING THE HEAT:** Deputy CM DK Shivakumar speaks to functionaries and workers on the party's election strategy for the bypoll in Bagalkot on Wednesday. If Congress wins, Siddaramaiah's camp may push for Shivakumar to be removed as state party president

### Clamour for cabinet rejig

The bypolls have also revived demands for a cabinet rejig. First-time MLAs have written to the high command seeking changes, while their representatives are planning to visit New Delhi after campaigning ends on April 7. Senior MLAs have also met Siddaramaiah separately to press their demand.

Saleem downplayed the internal churn. "Our focus is to win the bypolls, nothing else. If we do, it will be a collective achievement," he said.

### Delhi call after results?

Meanwhile, the Shivakumar camp is expected to renew its push for a CM change, with supporters anticipating that the high command may call both Siddaramaiah and Shivakumar to New Delhi after the results on May 4.

"Credit for victory in the bypoll will obviously go to Shivakumar as he is the party president. He is at the forefront of campaigning and his contribution cannot be denied," said Kunigal MLA HD Ranganath.

Siddaramaiah, meanwhile, told voters at a rally: "You are not voting for Congress candidates, but for me. The victory will strengthen me further."

# Census: CMO says data safe as self-enumeration begins

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

**Bengaluru**: The state govt Wednesday launched an awareness campaign for self-enumeration for Census 2027, urging citizens to submit details online and cooperate with enumerators during the house listing exercise.

The self-enumeration window opened Wednesday, and citizens can register till April 15, ahead of field surveys scheduled between April 16 and May 15. The move allows households to provide details in advance before enumerators begin visits.

Under the system, any household member can fill in information through the official portal. A unique self-enumeration ID will be generated and sent via mobile or email, which must be shared with the enumerator during verification. Officials said the process offers a secure and flexible way for citizens to participate.

Besides Karnataka, the exercise began also in Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Goa, Sikkim, Odisha, Lakshadweep, Mizoram, and parts of Delhi such as NDMC and Delhi Cantonment.

**STEP-BY-STEP PROCESS**

**SECTION 1: ACCESS & REGISTRATION**

- Visit [https://se.census.gov.in] (**https://se.census.gov.in**) and log in after selecting State/UT and entering captcha
- Register household by entering head of household, mobile number and email ID (optional)

**Note:** Mobile number and head's name cannot be changed later

**SECTION 2: VERIFICATION & LOCATION**

- Select preferred language and verify using OTP
- Enter location details including district, PIN code and locality
- Mark exact residence by placing the red marker on map

**SECTION 3: DATA ENTRY & SUBMISSION**

- Fill house listing and housing census questionnaire
- Review details, edit if required or save draft
- Finally submit; no changes allowed after submission
- Receive unique 11-digit SE ID via SMS/email

**SECTION 4: FIELD VALIDATION**

House listing and housing census forms the first phase of the nationwide exercise and covers housing conditions, assets and amenities. The second phase, scheduled for Feb next year, will focus on population count and collect demographic, socio-economic and cultural data. A statement from the CMO featured an animation video with two characters, Pragati and Vikas, depicted as enumerators appealing for public cooperation. "The information you provide will become the foundation for the country's development," the characters say.

Emphasising data safety, the CMO said the process is "100% confidential and secure", and appealed to citizens to participate responsibly.

## COMPLAINT AGAINST MLA FOR MONKEY REMARK

BJP filed a formal complaint with Karnataka's chief electoral officer against Pradeep Eshwar, Chikkaballapur MLA, alleging he made derogatory and offensive remarks against party functionaries while campaigning for the bypolls.

In a separate complaint, the party demanded the dismissal of Chandru Nugli, a govt teacher and president of Teachers' Association, for allegedly being involved in an election campaign in Bagalkot.

BJP Bengaluru South District president and MLA CK Ramamurthy filed the complaint against Eshwar, while Bengaluru South District president S Harish filed the complaint against Nugli.

Ramamurthy alleged Eshwar used insulting language while campaigning for Congress, on March 27. The complaint says he referred to BJP members as "monkeys", "incompetent" and "idiots", which the party called "highly objectionable and violates the model code of conduct".

BJP said such remarks not only insult political opponents but also amount to violations under provisions of the Representation of the People Act, 1951, and the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, 2023. It urged the Election Commission to act against Eshwar.

In the other complaint, Harish alleged Nugli had campaigned for Congress when the CM visited Bagalkot and demanded his dismissal. TNN

# Fertiliser supply no hurdle, state ready for kharif sowing

**Pearl.DSouza**@timesofindia.com

**Bengaluru**: While parts of the world, especially Southeast Asia, grapples with a shortage, supply of fertilisers in Karnataka remains adequate, with agriculture department officials saying the state is ready to meet demand for the kharif season.

The assurance is in line with the Centre's assessment. In a written reply to Rajya Sabha MP from Karnataka Lahar Singh Siroya on March 24, Union minister for chemicals and fertilisers Anupriya Patel said there are no issues with stock of urea, DAP, MOP and NPK and that domestic urea production stood at 306.7 lakh tonnes in 2024-25.

At the state level, Dr Puthra, director of agriculture, told TOI: "We have been given the same allocation as last year — 30 lakh tonnes."

Fertiliser allocation is finalised before each cropping season by the department of agriculture and farmers' welfare in consultation with states, based on projected demand. Karnataka, in turn, prepares a district-wise, product-wise and company-wise distribution plan from the monthly supply schedule shared by the Union govt. The plan is executed through primary agriculture cooperative societies and licensed private retailers in coordination with manufacturers.

Officials said new cropping patterns have helped moderate demand. Oilseeds and pulses, which are being promoted to cut imports, require relatively less fertiliser. "Ragi and other millets that Karnataka majorly produces do not require much fertiliser either. Maize, however, requires a substantial amount of fertiliser," Puthra said.

**COMFORT ZONE**

| Product | Demand | Stock | DBT sales |
|---|---|---|---|
| Urea | 18.2 | 21.0 | 17.9 |
| Diammonium Phosphate (DAP) | 5.8 | 7.6 | 5.8 |
| Muriate of Potash (MOP) | 2.2 | 3.0 | 2.3 |
| NPKs | 16.6 | 26.5 | 20.7 |

Figures in lakh tonnes | Up to March 18, 2026 | Source: Agriculture department

PTI

**BIZ AS USUAL:** Karnataka has been given the same allocation of 30 tonnes as last year

### Domestic production up

The Centre also highlighted policy measures to boost domestic production. The new investment policy, 2012 enabled six urea plants across Telangana, Uttar Pradesh, Jharkhand, Bihar, West Bengal and Rajasthan, each with a capacity of 12.7 lakh tonnes per annum, adding 76.2 lakh tonnes overall.

Also, the new urea policy, 2015 has increased production by an estimated 20 to 25 lakh tonnes compared to a decade ago.

# Education key to nation's growth: Prez

President Droupadi Murmu Wednesday said education remains central to national development, stressing that access for poor and deprived children will shape the country's future.

Speaking at the 119th birth anniversary and 'guruvandana' of Sri Shivakumara Swami at Siddaganga Mutt, she highlighted the institution's role in expanding access to learning from primary school to higher education in engineering and management.

Referring to 12th century reformer Basavanna, Murmu said, "His vision of a discrimination-free and participative society offered an early model of democratic values." She said Karnataka stands out for public service, spirituality and modern progress, and credited its people for contributions to nation-building. She described seers like Shivakumara Swami as "shaping the moral fabric of society". TNN

ANI

**FOR THE CHILDREN:** President Droupadi Murmu during birth anniversary celebrations of Sivakumara Swami at Siddaganga Mutt on Wednesday. PM Modi also paid tribute, saying, "He (Shivakumar Swami) stands in collective memory as an embodiment of compassion, humility and unwavering service to humanity."

# High costs slow relocation of 23k families from forests

**Sandeep.Moudgal**
@timesofindia.com

**Bengaluru:** Of the 23,828 forest-dwelling families identified by the govt for relocation to protect wildlife and reduce human-animal conflict across nine reserved forests, only 4,316 families have so far agreed to voluntarily move out of core forest areas, indicating a prolonged and complex process ahead.

The highest concentration of families is in Kali reserved forest, where 7,856 families live in 69 villages. This is followed by MM Hills with 7,200 families in 18 villages, and the Sharavathi wildlife range with 3,000 families in six villages. Chincholi reserved forest has the lowest number — 96 families in one village.

Officials said relocation is a sensitive issue. "Asking families to uproot and move away from ancestral lands and long-held properties is not a small thing," an official said. "It is a slow, long-drawn process. The forest department must engage regularly with tribal families and their representatives. As newer generations get exposed to technology and progress, we expect voluntary relocation to improve."

**ON THE MOVE**

| Forest | Villages | Total families | Agreed to move | Voluntarily decided to vacate | Not applied for resettlement |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Bandipur | 0 | 254 | 254 | 254 | 0 |
| Nagarhole | 64 | 2,785 | 822 | 822 | 1,963 |
| Bhadra | 16 | 501 | 431 | 452 | 49 |
| Kali | 69 | 7,856 | 679 | 1,382 | 6,474 |
| Kudremukh | 108 | 1,382 | 356 | 670 | 712 |
| Bhimgarh | 13 | 754 | 27 | 394 | 360 |
| MM Hills | 18 | 7,200 | 0 | 230 | 6,970 |
| Sharavathi | 6 | 3,000 | 0 | 16 | 2,984 |
| Chincholi | 1 | 96 | 0 | 96 | 0 |

### Financial constraints

While persuading families is a challenge, the larger hurdle for the govt is financial. Officials estimate that a staggering Rs 4,000 crore will be required to relocate all identified families.

Under the National Tiger Conservation Authority compensation package, each individual above 18 years is entitled to Rs 15 lakh. Based on current population estimates, the total outlay has escalated significantly. In contrast, the govt currently allocates only around Rs 5 crore annually for such relocation efforts.

Officials cited the Kudremukh project as an example of rising costs. Approved in 2005 at under Rs 150 crore, the project is now estimated at Rs 300 crore, with further delays likely to see costs soar again. "Kudremukh alone has 108 villages and 1,382 families, of which 670 have agreed to relocate," sources said. This fiscal, the govt sanctioned an additional Rs 20 crore as a special grant for Kudremukh, aimed at accelerating relocation and creating more space for wildlife.

### Fair rehabilitation

Forest minister Eswhar Khandre said the govt remains committed to protecting forests while ensuring fair rehabilitation for displaced families. "Survey details will give us a clearer picture of financial requirements for rehabilitation packages," Khandre said.

# Rakshit Shetty's studio fined ₹25 lakh for song use

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

**Bengaluru/New Delhi:** The Delhi High Court has directed Paramvah Studios and its founder, Kannada actor-director Rakshit Shetty, to pay an additional Rs 5 lakh as penal costs for the unauthorised use of two songs in the film Bachelor Party.

This is in addition to the Rs 20 lakh cost imposed on Aug 12, 2024, which has already been deposited by the studio. In an order dated March 28, 2026, Justice Tejas Karia noted that the use of the original works was not minimal. The song *Omme Ninnanu* was used for 31 seconds, while *Nyaya Ellide* featured for 7 seconds.

Citing provisions of the Copyright Act, the court observed that even a single frame from a copyrighted audio-visual work cannot be used without the owner's permission.

MRT Music, which claims ownership of the songs, including their sound recordings and underlying literary and musical works under a 2020 assignment deed, had approached the court over the alleged infringement. The plaintiff alleged that two songs were used without a licence—one on television in a scene, the other sung in a classroom. The film was released in January 2024 and later on OTT platforms.

Paramvah Studios and Rakshit Shetty argued the usage was minimal and did not require permission.

Justice Tejas Karia rejected this, noting that *Nyaya Ellide* ("Where Is Justice") was deliberately used to highlight the protagonist's plight.

"The use of the original works was a conscious creative choice to further the plot," he observed.

**BACHELOR PARTY**

# Registrar held for sexual harassment

**Bengaluru:** City police arrested the registrar of the Karnataka State Nursing Council, K Mallu, on alleged charges of sexually harassing a 30-year-old female employee.

Mallu was taken into custody Tuesday and produced before a local court Wednesday, which sent him to 14-day judicial custody. She alleged he tried to kiss her and force her into his car, from which she managed to escape, police said. TNN

SANDESHA MENDON

# 'There's a rhythm and sweetness to the way Mangaloreans speak'

# Who am I to deny my mother the right to be buried according to her belief, says Prakash Raj

Actors Sruthi Hariharan and Prakash Raj at the funeral home earlier this week in Bengaluru

A

# Director Ranjith arrested, sent into judicial custody

D

**Police custody**

**What's the complaint?**

M

**'I have used my films only to focus on real lives'**

Q When I do a film, I expect to be very happy to promote it and be associated with it. I don't want to be an object only to direct. I did that for over two films earlier, and I regret it

# Looking forward to doing a lot of work this year: Hina

A

Q When you were doing Ishq, a web girl from where you are known, and then you step out, and you want to try new things in business, laughter

# TIMES NATION

THE TIMES OF INDIA, BENGALURU | THURSDAY, APRIL 2, 2026

IT'S GOVT'S RESPONSIBILITY TO PROTECT KASHMIRI PANDITS' SHRINES, PROPERTIES, SAYS J&K CM OMAR

MEGHALAYA WORKING TO BOOST DIGITAL CONNECTIVITY VIA COLLABORATION WITH STARLINK, SAYS CM SANGMA

**HACK OF THE DAY** — **USE DIGITAL RC AND DL INSTEAD OF PAPER COPIES**

**WHAT IT SOLVES:** Makes it easier to carry and show valid vehicle documents without worrying about losing physical copies during travel

**WHAT TO DO:** Use DigiLocker or mParivahan to store and show your driving licence and registration certificate digitally when needed

**STEPS:**

1. **Install** the DigiLocker or mParivahan app on your phone
2. **Sign in** using your registered mobile number and required verification
3. **Fetch** your driving licence and vehicle registration details from the official source
4. **Save** the digital documents in the app for easy access
5. **Show** the digital record during checks instead of carrying paper copies

**NOTE:** Make sure the documents are fetched from the official issuer-linked records, not just uploaded as scans. Issued digital records are more useful for verification

SCAN FOR MORE

*Hacks are based on verified public sources. Readers are advised to follow official websites & updated rules*

## MP forest dept team held hostage, assaulted by sand mining mafia

A forest department team of Son Gharial sanctuary in MP's Sidhi's Sihawal area was allegedly held hostage for a few hours Tuesday night and assaulted by the sand mafia during a crackdown on illegal mining. The team had reached around midnight while mining was under way. Seeing officials, some suspects fled. However, a group of alleged sand mafia soon regrouped and returned to the site, surrounded the team, and held them hostage. They assaulted the forest officials and fled in their tractors around 3am. Sources said there were at least seven members in the forest team. Forest officials informed police, who rushed to the spot. Police have registered a complaint against two identified people and one unidentified person. They have launched a hunt for the suspects. TNN

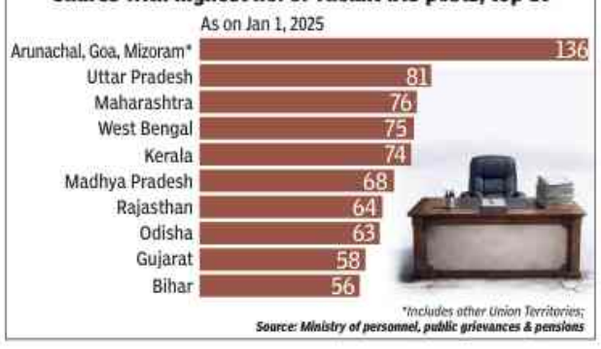
**STATISTICS** A slice of life in numbers

## 20% shortfall in IAS officers, bigger states worst hit

Around 1,300 Indian Administrative Service posts remained vacant nationwide in 2025 against total authorised posts of 6,877. Higher shortfalls were seen in bigger states like UP and Maharashtra

**Cadres with highest no. of vacant IAS posts, top 10**

As on Jan 1, 2025




*Includes other Union Territories;
Source: Ministry of personnel, public grievances & pensions

# Biz LPG price hiked 3rd time in a mth; to hit industries & eateries

## IOC Ups Prices Of Premium Petrol, Diesel

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

**New Delhi**: Price of commercial LPG cylinders rose by over 10% on Wednesday to Rs 2,078 in the capital, compared to Rs 1,883, reflecting the surge in global gas prices amid the ongoing military conflict in energy-rich West Asia.

The 19kg LPG cylinder is largely used by industries and eateries. Domestic consumers, who use 14.2kg cylinders, won't see a hike. For commercial LPG, this is the third increase in the past month — it was Rs 1,768.5 on March 1.

The ministry said that, at current prices, oil marketing companies (OMC) were incurring an under-recovery of Rs 380 per cylinder, and cumulative losses by end-May were estimated at around Rs 40,484cr. Of Rs 60,000cr losses incurred in 2024-25, Rs 30,000cr were absorbed by oil PSUs and Rs 30,000cr by Centre to insulate consumers from high international LPG prices.

Officials said the OMCs were also incurring under-recoveries of Rs 24.4 per litre on petrol and Rs 104.99 per litre on diesel at the retail level. IndianOil also raised the price of 100-octane petrol and premium diesel by Rs 11 and Rs 1.5 per litre, respectively. Prices of regular petrol and diesel remain unchanged.

"The April 1 increase was necessitated by a 44% surge in the Saudi Contract Price, from $542 per tonne in March to $780 per tonne for April, as 20-30% of LPG supplies were stuck in the Strait of Hormuz," the petroleum ministry said, adding that commercial cylinders account for less than 10% of total LPG consumption in the country.

AFP

A restaurant forced to close its doors in Varanasi on Wednesday

## 3 LPG ships await Navy's orders to cross Hormuz

**New Delhi:** Out of 18 Indian ships stranded to the west of Strait of Hormuz, three vessels — Jag Vikram, Green Asha and Green Sanvi — carrying LPG are currently drifting north-east of Abu Musa Island in Persian Gulf, **reports Dipak Dash**. They are following Indian Navy's instructions and awaiting orders for transit through the strait, **TOI** has learnt.

People aware of the development said the three vessels loaded with cooking gas may constitute the next lot to head to India. "The directorate general of shipping, in coordination with ship owners, agencies and Indian missions, is actively monitoring the situation," shipping ministry said.

## 1998 bank fraud: Cong MLA found guilty, sent to jail

**New Delhi:** Holding that "documents don't lie", a Delhi court has convicted Congress MLA from MP **Rajendra Bharti** and co-accused Raghuvir Sharan Prajapati in a cheating and forgery case involving a bank. It found clear evidence of manipulation of fixed deposit (FD) records using correction fluid to alter the tenure of the deposit, **reports Koushiki Saha**.

Bharti, 67, was sent to jail though the hearing to decide quantum of sentence has been scheduled for Thursday.

The case centres on a 1998 FD opened in the name of Bharti's mother Savitri Shyam where complainant Zila Sahkari Krishi Aur Grahmin Vikas Bank alleged he conspired to alter bank records to extend deposit tenure from three years to 15 years to unlawfully draw higher interest on an FD of Rs 10 lakh in his mother's name.

## J&K to revive 120-yr-old hydroelectric project

**Naseer.Ganai**
@timesofindia.com

**Srinagar:** As Jammu & Kashmir govt is accelerating work on power projects in the wake of India putting the Indus Waters Treaty in abeyance following Pahalgam terror attack in April 2025, it has announced that it will revive Mohra Power Project — a 120-year-old hydroelectric facility that has remained defunct since the 1990s.

Chief minister Omar Abdullah, who also holds charge of the power department, told J&K assembly Wednesday that the board of directors of J&K State Power Development Corporation had initiated the process for the project's revival. In a meeting on Feb 9, the board approved the floating of a limited tender inquiry to engage a transaction adviser from firms empanelled with the department of economic affairs for the renovation, modernisation, upgrade, operation and maintenance of the 10.5MW plant.

Located on the banks of the Jhelum river in Uri sector of north Kashmir's Baramulla district, the Mohra Power Project was commissioned in 1905 and is among the oldest hydroelectric stations in India. It was built as a run-of-the-river project and initially had a capacity of about 5MW. The project was damaged by floods in Sept 1992, after which its tailrace system was affected and power generation declined to around 3MW before operations ceased, said former engineer Iftikhar A Drabu.

## Joint working group to set rules for rare earth corridors

**New Delhi**: Govt has formed a joint working group, comprising members representing various stakeholders, to set guidelines for establishing dedicated rare earth corridors in identified states, Union minister Jitendra Singh said Wednesday.

In Lok Sabha, he said the proposed corridors in Odisha, Kerala, Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu will help reduce India's import dependence on these minerals and enhance domestic capability in this strategic sector.

He said the corridors would focus on mining, processing, research and manufacturing, and help align these initiatives with national priorities of becoming self-reliant and achieving net-zero emissions by 2070. The rare earth corridors were announced in Union Budget 2026-27. TNN

## Blast near BJP office in C'garh; hunt on for 2

**Pawan.Tiwari**
@timesofindia.com

**Chandigarh**: Two men lobbed a hand grenade at Punjab BJP office in Chandigarh's Sector 37 Wednesday evening, sparking panic in the area and a security alert. No one was hurt as the grenade detonated in a parking lot, falling short of the boundary wall of BJP office. Police said CCTV cameras have captured the faces of two suspects and they are being identified.

The blast occurred around 4.50pm. Chandigarh SSP Kanwardeep Kaur described it as a 'low-intensity explosion'. Everything will become clear after police and forensic probe, she said. Sources said a Chinese-made P86 hand grenade was used.

A 10-second video of the attack, apparently self-filmed, popped up on social media within minutes. Separatist group Babbar Khalsa took responsibility for the attack in a social media post but police are yet to confirm it.

BJP youth member Gurdeep Singh, whose car was hit by pellets/splinters, said a meeting was on at the office at the time of the blast. A scooter belonging to a member of BJP's IT cell was also damaged. Punjab BJP chief Sunil Jakhar said, "There have been grenade attacks on police stations in Punjab. Recently, a statue of Dr BR Ambedkar was vandalised in Hoshiarpur. This series of incidents indicates attempts to disrupt communal harmony of the state," he said.

Police have been ordered to conduct night patrolling.

# Jain community cricket league sells 12 franchises for ₹31cr in debut auction

**Parag.Dave**@timesofindia.com

Mumbai Sobo Star went for Rs 3.7cr & Bengaluru followed at Rs 3.15cr

**Ahmedabad**: Twelve teams, more than 50 bidders and a combined auction value of Rs 31 crore – a cricket league built around the Jain community has just produced auction numbers that wouldn't look out of place in mainstream sport.

Jain International Trade Organisation-backed JITO Premier League's inaugural franchise auction on March 24 had all the jazz of a fiercely competitive IPL-style gavel event. Mumbai Sobo Star went for Rs 3.7 crore, becoming the night's most expensive franchise. Bengaluru followed at Rs 3.15 crore. A Surat businessman picked up the Gujarat JPL team for Rs 2.36 crore.

Shweta Hundia, secretary of JITO Sports, said the league had already received 6,500 applications from players within the Jain community and secured Rs 5.1 crore in title and trophy sponsorship. JITO Apex chairman Pruthviraj Kothari said the league had moved away from its earlier charity model to being run as a fully corporate sports property. "This year, we plan to host more than 40 matches across 12 cities in April-May," he said.

Team owners need to pay only 50% of the franchise fee in the first year. JITO Sports Foundation, the entity managing JPL, covers coaching, travel and other costs. Non-Jain investors can hold up to 20% stake in a team. At the end of the season, 40% of the surplus revenue will be distributed among the teams, Kothari said.

Teams are also expected to earn through brand endorsements, and the owners will eventually be able to trade their stakes at higher valuations, JITO Ahmedabad's secretary Jainik Vakil said.

JITO Apex vice-chairman Himanshu Shah said, "Players will be signed on three-year contracts and the fees will be determined based on categories: A (Rs 1 lakh), B (Rs 60,000) and C (Rs 40,000)."

## Daughters also responsible for parents' care: HC

**Hyderabad:** Daughters have an equal responsibility of taking care of their elderly parents while claiming rights over parental property, Telangana high court has said, **reports Pinto Deepak**.

HC was hearing a petition filed by a 66-year-old woman from Suryapet district, who alleged neglect by her son and sought action for non-compliance with official orders directing him to return her property. She is currently residing with her daughter.

During the hearing, Justice B Vijaysen Reddy said the courts are flooded with petitions filed by elderly parents seeking to evict their sons and daughters-in-law from their property, without availing any available options for a compromise.

The court said daughters should also share responsibility of taking care for their parents. "Who would take care of the elderly parents who only have daughters. Often, daughters want property, but they do not want to maintain their parents," the judge said.

## Talaq effective from date hubby gives it, says HC

**Prayagraj**: Allahabad high court has said that under 'Mohammedan law', a divorce takes effect from the date a husband pronounces talaq and a subsequent court decree confirming it is merely declaratory in nature, **reports Rajesh Kumar Pandey**.

The court was hearing the plea of Humaira Riyaz, challenging a family court order that rejected her application under section 125 CrPC seeking maintenance from her second husband.

The high court allowed the wife's petition and set aside the family court's order to the extent that it denied maintenance to her. The matter is now back to the family court to decide her claim of maintenance afresh on its merits.

The family court had declared her second marriage, solemnised in May 2012, void on the ground that her first marriage was not legally dissolved at the time.

Her first husband pronounced talaq on Feb 27, 2005, while the legal decree was passed on Jan 8, 2013.

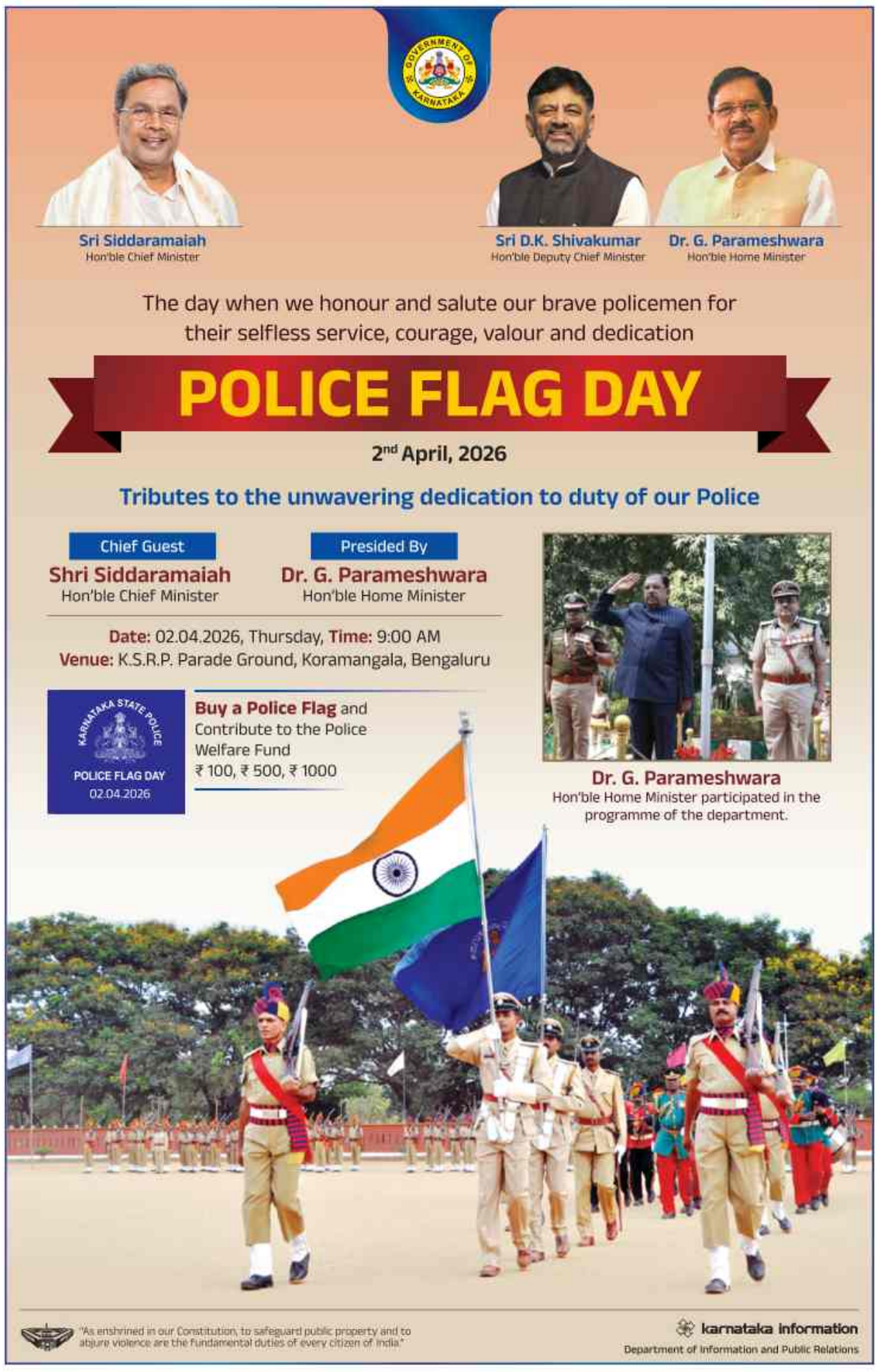
## HC: Widow can claim upkeep from dad-in-law

**Prayagraj**: Allahabad high court has observed that a husband's obligation to maintain his wife continues even after his death, and that a widow can claim maintenance from her father-in-law, **reports Rajesh Kumar Pandey**.

Dismissing an appeal filed by a Rampur resident, Akul Rastogi, a division bench observed in its March 17 order that according to section 19 of the Hindu Adoptions and Maintenance Act, 1956, a widowed daughter-in-law can claim maintenance from her father-in-law, "provided and to the extent that she is unable to maintain herself out of her own earnings or other property".

The provision stipulates that a widow can only approach her father-in-law if she is unable to obtain maintenance from the estate of her deceased husband or her own parents, or from her children and their estates.

Importantly, such an obligation ceases on the remarriage of the daughter-in-law, said a legal expert.

# CAG flags Indian embassy in China as 'uninhabitable'

## 'Extremely Dilapidated Within Yrs Despite Renovation & AMC'

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

**The 'extremely dilapidated condition' of the new building came under the auditor's scrutiny as govt had spent, besides incurring expenditure on renovation itself, on a five-year maintenance guarantee and an AMC**

**New Delhi:** Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) has raised questions on the condition of the new Indian embassy building in Beijing — how it turned into an "uninhabitable" place, "extremely dilapidated, within a few years of renovation and despite incurring expenditure on a comprehensive annual maintenance contract (AMC).

The embassy had shifted its offices and residential quarters for 16 senior officials to a new renovated building premises in Jan 2012 from the old chancery premises that was vacated for redevelopment. Now, the embassy has proposed another expenditure of over Rs 17 crore to renovate the new premises.

The "extremely dilapidated condition" of the new building came under the auditor's scrutiny as govt had spent, besides incurring expenditure on renovation itself, on a five-year maintenance guarantee and a comprehensive AMC thereafter.

In its audit report, tabled in Parliament on Monday, CAG said embassy officials are living outside on rent and six residential units of the embassy premises have been vacant as of Feb 2025. The remaining 10 are in an extremely dilapidated condition with "damaged wooden floor and walls, and blockage of sewage and drainage pipes", it said.

In Aug 2023, the embassy had forwarded a proposal to the external affairs ministry for "complete renovation" of 16 residential units at a cost of over Rs 17 crore, which, CAG said, is still under consideration (till Jan 2025). Meanwhile, the embassy has spent Rs 3 crore towards renting accommodation for its personnel.

Despite having AMC and incurring significant expenditure on repairs, "due to multiple wear and tear issues, erosion and bursting of water and heating pipelines, water leakages, requirement of waterproofing of roof, damages to the wooden floor and walls, and blockage of sewage and drainage pipes", these newly constructed residential units are becoming uninhabitable", CAG observed. AMC of the new building had started from April 2017.

"The audit observed (Oct 2023) that though embassy offices were shifted out of the old premises in Jan 2012 and the premises was not being used for any active purpose/service since 2014, the mission did not take effective action to get the heating supply to the vacant building discontinued and incurred an expenditure of Rs 74 lakh towards its heating charges during the period 2015-16 to 2024-25," CAG said.

The embassy in its response (Sept 2024) said, "The units were declared uninhabitable subsequent to multiple wear and tear issues which arose after expiry of quality warranty period of five years".

## SC pulls up Barabanki court lawyers, transfers case to Delhi

AmitAnand.Choudhary @timesofindia.com

**New Delhi:** Expressing concern over lawyers resorting to violence in Barabanki district court to ensure no advocate takes up the case of certain accused persons, who remained unrepresented before the trial court, Supreme Court has said that it is a case of custodians of justice (lawyers) turning into perpetrators of violence and directed transfer of trial from Uttar Pradesh to Delhi. It also granted bail to the accused.

The lawyers took the law into their own hands after one from their fraternity, who had refused to pay toll at Gotona Bara Toll Plaza on Lucknow-Sultanpur Highway, got into an altercation with the toll plaza staff.

A case was registered against the toll staff, who were taken into custody. The lawyers then collectively decided not to accept the brief of the accused, and a resolution was passed by the local bar to that effect. One advocate who dared to take up the case was beaten up and his office was ransacked.

Left with no option, the accused, who had been in jail for more than two months, approached the apex court to get the trial transferred out of UP.

## INDIA DIGEST

### President Murmu, PM Modi complete self-enumeration for Census 2027

Home minister Amit Shah completes his self-enumeration on Wednesday

**New Delhi:** President Droupadi Murmu, vice president CP Radhakrishnan and Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Wednesday completed self-enumeration in the first round of data collection for Census 2027, which began in New Delhi Municipal Council (NDMC) and Delhi Cantonment areas. Senior govt officials who were assigned census duties visited both Rashtrapati Bhavan and the PM's residence to facilitate the self-enumeration process. In a post on X, Modi said he completed his self-enumeration and urged citizens to do the same. "Completed my self-enumeration. Today marks the beginning of the first phase of Census 2027, relating to house-listing and housing operations. For the first time, census data collection is being carried out digitally, empowering people to self-enumerate their household details. I appeal to the people of India to participate actively in the Census process," he said.

### Anita Advani's plea to recognise relationship with late Rajesh Khanna as marriage dismissed

Bombay high court on Wednesday dismissed an appeal filed by Anita Advani to recognise her long-term relationship with the late actor Rajesh Khanna as marriage. Justice Sharmila Deshmukh ruled that by Advani's pleadings, it "is evident that the substantive relief sought is of being declared as widow of (Khanna), which is a necessary sequitur of the declaration...", but the relationship doesn't satisfy the tests formulated by Supreme Court over recognition of a live-in relation as a marriage. Khanna was not divorced from his estranged actor-wife Dimple Jatin Khanna, the court was informed.

### 1 killed, another critical as madrassa lift crashes in UP

A 22-year-old man was killed and another seriously injured after a lift plunged from the second floor of a madrassa in Tilbhandeshwar area of Varanasi. The incident occurred late on Tuesday at Madrassa Jamia Hamidia Rizvia, where a wedding was underway in the community hall. Gaurav Kumar, ACP, said Aasib Ali, 22, and Hasnain Raza, 20, were in the lift when it went lost control and crashed. The victims were taken to BHU Trauma Centre where Ali succumbed to his injuries while Raza remains critical, Kumar said.

## Amaravati declared AP's sole capital

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

**New Delhi:** Amaravati will be the sole capital of Andhra Pradesh, as Lok Sabha on Wednesday gave it a statutory status by passing AP Reorganisation (Amendment) Bill by a voice vote, with major opposition parties, including Congress and Samajwadi Party, also supporting the bill.

Former AP CM Jagan Mohan Reddy's YSRCP opposed the bill, demanding Centre first give special status to the state for its development, as after reorganisation major revenue-earning Hyderabad went to Telangana. Govt's decision to push AP reorganisation bill through this session settles a contentious issue — over which TDP and YSRCP have been bitterly feuding — in favour of governing TDP, a BJP ally.

**Govt's decision to push AP reorganisation bill settles a contentious issue in favour of governing TDP, a BJP ally**

TDP govt, led by N Chandrababu Naidu, during its 2014-19 tenure declared Amaravati as the new capital, and acquired huge parcels of land, and launched development works, but its successor, YSRCP govt headed by Reddy, sought to scuttle the move and declared two more cities — Visakhapatnam and Kurnool — as capitals. With Naidu back in office in 2024, and becoming a valuable ally to BJP that lost majority in LS, he revived the Amaravati project.

## PM chairs spl CCS, assesses critical needs for people

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

**New Delhi:** A key meeting chaired by PM Narendra Modi on Wednesday deliberated on interventions to be made to address emerging challenges due to the West Asia conflict in sectors such as agriculture, civil aviation, shipping and logistics, as govt emphasised that measures were being taken to ensure supply of petroleum products, especially LNG and LPG, and sufficient power availability.

Various efforts like maintaining urea production to meet requirements and coordinating with overseas supplies for DAP/NPKS fertilisers are also being taken, with PM calling for ensuring their availability in Kharif and Rabi seasons at a special meeting of the Cabinet Committee on Security (CCS). Retail prices of food commodities have been stable over the past one month, a statement said, adding control rooms were set up for monitoring and interaction with states and UTs on prices and enforcement of the Essential Commodities Act.

A day after he accused Congress at a public meeting of stoking fear by fanning false claims over the West Asia crisis, Modi at the CCS meeting also called for "timely and smooth flow of authentic information" to people to curb rumour-mongering. The governing BJP has accused opposition parties, especially Congress, of spreading rumours of lockdown due to shortage of fuels and hike in their prices after the current round of assembly polls is over.

Modi assessed the availability of items of critical need for the common people and said that all efforts must be made to safeguard citizens from the impact of the conflict.

Sources are being diversified for procurement of LPG with new inflows from different countries, the statement said, adding that LNG is being sourced from several nations as well. Cabinet secretary T V Somanathan said in his briefing that LPG prices for domestic consumers have remained unchanged and anti-diversion enforcement to curb hoarding and black marketing of LPG is being conducted regularly. Enough coal stock exists which will serve power needs adequately in the coming months.

Home minister Amit Shah, finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman and external affairs minister S Jaishankar were among those who attended the meeting.

## A SLOW RIDE TO ELEPHANTA CAVES

SL Shanth Kumar

**JOY RIDE:** Passengers ride a toy train along the pier on Elephanta Island, transporting visitors from jetty to the base of the hill that leads to the Elephanta Caves, a Unesco World Heritage Site near Mumbai, on Wednesday. The service, priced at Rs 10, offers a convenient link for tourists to access cave complex

## Govt closely watching domestic airfares

▶ Continued from page 1

For international operations, ATF prices have more than doubled in the last month, consequently driving a significant impact on the airline's operating costs on these routes," IndiGo said in a statement.

With several key elections round the corner, govt is closely watching domestic airfares. Joint secretary in aviation ministry Asangba Chuba Ao said: "(Limiting domestic ATF hike to 25%) will ensure domestic operational costs of Indian carriers remain manageable.... prevents a potential industry-wide crisis.... allows airlines to maintain competitive pricing for domestic travellers, avoiding additional fuel surcharges that would have been necessary under a market-linked pricing mechanism. Pricing is deregulated, but we monitor fares. If there are any abnormal fare surges, we will intervene."

Oil companies are yet to get clarity on the impact that the "staggered increase" will have on their finances. Replying to a question on why there was a staggered increase in prices and whether there was a timeline for the next revision, Sujata Sharma, joint secretary in oil ministry, said it was a policy matter and govt will make a decision at an appropriate time. On being asked if govt would compensate oil marketing companies for under-recoveries on ATF, she again termed it as a policy matter.

## PIL leads HC to halt axe on greenery across Hry

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

**Chandigarh:** Punjab and Haryana HC on Wednesday restrained the felling of trees anywhere in Haryana without its permission, expressing shock over the fact that state had the lowest forest cover in the country.

HC passed the order while hearing a PIL filed against proposed cutting of trees for the 19.2km, six-lane Zirakpur–Panchkula access-controlled highway project.

The project involves diversion of over 17.5 hectares of forest land and felling of over 5,000 mature trees.

A copy of the order was not yet available at the time of filing this report. However, senior advocate Anand Chhiber confirmed HC had not only stayed cutting of trees for the project but also restrained tree-felling in all of Haryana without its permission.

"This is a significant environmental protection order, especially in the context of this PIL concerning the proposed Zirakpur–Panchkula access-controlled highway project, which threatens large-scale destruction of the Tri-City ecological zone, including Panchkula's principal green lung areas."

## *Beneath the Marble: The disaster hidden behind the white desert*

**Kishangarh:** Kishangarh, Rajasthan, has come to be known as 'The Marble city of India', becoming a social media sensation and attracting thousands of tourists every day. A place that was once known for its marble industry and Bani Thani paintings, has assumed the identity of a viral tourist destination due to one of its biggest attractions today — an all-white marble dumping yard, Asia's largest marble dumping ground, looking almost like a snow-covered Landscape. The ground manages to attract up to 20,000 tourists on weekends and has come to be known as 'The White Desert'. Farmers in neighbouring villages of Tokra, Bhojiyawas, Rahimpura, Phaloda, Mohanpura, and Kali Dungri complain that the marble dust often settles on their agricultural land and mixes with irrigation water, steadily degrading the soil health.

"When initially the marble waste accumulated, it was not this bad. Over the years, the slurry has dried up. Now when the winds blow, the marble dust settles all over the crops. We try to use sprinklers to help wash it, but excessive watering also damages the crops," tells a 42-year-old woman working in her farm in Tokra to the PTI reporter on the condition of anonymity.

"We cover our faces while working on the farm because the dust causes allergies. Sometimes when the winds are strong, the marble dust also comes into our house and onto the terrace, and we must close the windows. While all this is manageable, the problem is loss of livelihood since agriculture is our only source of income," she said.

The usual crops grown in the belt are wheat, barley, mustard and gram in summer and winter seasons, and millets and moong in the monsoon season.

PTI

Visitors at the Kishangarh marble waste dumpyard, in Rajasthan

A farmer from Kali Dungri reported that the yield in his farms has been reduced to almost half over the past five years. When a PTI reporter visited these villages, the farmers showed their lands with marble dust sitting on them. Most of them refused to be identified, fearing targeting the marble giants operating in the area. Farmers whose agricultural land is close to the dumping yard are the worst affected. Among these is 52-year-old Mandraj had to give up farming altogether and start a tea stall to sustain himself.

"My farms now have a solid layer of marble waste. The slurry also entered my well, rendering it useless. I even complained to the administration, but nothing happened," he claimed. A study by the Central University of Rajasthan has labelled the site a "toxic tourist destination", citing air pollution, groundwater contamination and soil degradation. The issue has also reached the National Green Tribunal, which has constituted a joint committee to examine the impact. Sharma noted that despite its scale and impact, the dumping yard is being operated in flagrant violation of basic environmental safeguards. PTI

## Vendor heading to Cambodia with 198 SIMs held at Hyderabad airport

Mahesh.Buddi @timesofindia.com

**Hyderabad:** Sleuths of the Telangana Cyber Security Bureau (TGCSB) busted a racket supplying SIM cards to cyber fraud gangs and arrested five people, including a SIM card vendor, at the Rajiv Gandhi International Airport (RGIA) in Shamshabad while he was trying to fly to Cambodia with 198 pre-activated Indian SIMs.

The crucial tip-off came from immigration authorities at RIGA.

The significance of the arrest of Syed Ashraf Ali, a SIM card vendor and resident of Al Jubail Colony in Chandrayangutta, on Tuesday can be gauged from the scale of cyber frauds in the last few years.

TGCSB said 24 lakh victims were duped out of Rs 22,000 crore in 2025, while 19 lakh Indians lost nearly Rs 23,000 crore to cyber frauds in 2024. In Telangana, nearly 91,000 victims lost Rs 1,500 crore to cyber fraudsters in 2025, while over 90,000 people were duped in 2024 out of Rs 1,900 crore. After questioning the accused, the cyber sleuths found that over 600 SIM cards were illegally transported by the gang in six separate instances since 2023 to cyber fraud gangs operating from Cambodia.

"Immigration officers who specifically check passengers heading for Cambodia, Myanmar, and Laos, alerted us about suspected illegal transportation of Indian SIM cards," a TGCSB officer said.

A TGCSB team went to the airport and seized 198 Indian SIM cards of Vi (Vodafone Idea), Jio, and Airtel, all pre-activated and ready for use, from Ashraf Ali's hand baggage. "On interrogation, Ashraf revealed he was transporting the SIM cards to Cambodia for use in cyber fraud camps run by Chinese gangs. Ashraf procured those fraudulently by submitting credentials of other customers. He also colluded with a few other SIM card point of sale (PoS) agents in Hyderabad to collect more SIM cards," the TGCSB officer said.

TIMES TRIBUTE
PAYING HOMAGE TO THE DEPARTED SOUL
To book your ad | Logon to: ads.timesofindia.com or Call: 18001205474 (Toll Free)

BOOK OBITUARY ADS
To book an Obituary Ad Please contact:
Bharat
7760833522
TO BOOK ONLINE LOG ON TO
Ads.timesofindia.com
EXCLUSIVE OFFERS AND ASSISTANCE
SCAN TO BOOK

TO BOOK AN OBITUARY AD PLEASE CALL
18001205474
(Toll Free)
TO BOOK ONLINE LOG ON TO
Ads.timesofindia.com

REMEMBRANCE
SHARING MEMORIES

*7th Death Anniversary*

**Smt. K. R. SUSHEELA**

(Wife of B. V. Prabhakar)

Retd. Canara Bank Employee
01.11.1947 to 02.04.2019

You were the most loved and respected person in our family circle. You had a great helping nature and was a great soul! We miss U!!!
With love & affection from family members

TO BOOK AN OBITUARY AD PLEASE CALL
18001205474
(Toll Free)
TO BOOK ONLINE LOG ON TO
Ads.timesofindia.com
EXCLUSIVE OFFERS AND ASSISTANCE
SCAN TO BOOK

Pure Since 1925

100 Years of Bhima

BHIMA
# Akshaya Tritiya

100 YEARS.
100 DAYS.

100% OFF
ON MAKING CHARGES*

# BHIMA
# LEGACY FEST

UP TO
**100%*** OFF
ON MAKING CHARGES,
APPLICABLE ON GOLD,
SILVER AND DIAMOND.

**FREE**
24kt GOLD BAR
ON EVERY ₹1 LAKH
DIAMOND VALUE*.

## ADVANCE BOOKING NOW OPEN

PAY ONLY
**10%*** NOW

**FLEXI RATE**
VALID FROM
1ST TO 17TH APRIL

BOOK AND GET YOUR FAVOURITE
JEWELLERY AT THE LOWEST RATE*.

* T&C APPLY.

**BENGALURU:** Dickenson Road • Jayanagar 3rd Block • Koramangala • HBR Layout • Rajajinagar
Marathahalli • Hoodi • Malleshwaram • Jayanagar 4th Block • Commercial Street • RR Nagar
**UDUPI • HASSAN • MANGALURU • SHIVAMOGGA • VIJAYAWADA**
**CHENNAI • RAJAHMUNDRY • HOSUR • BELAGAVI • HUBBALLI | bhimagold.com**

FORMERLY BHIMA GOLD • DIAMONDS • SILVER • PLATINUM

BHIMA Helpline
1800-121-9076
(10:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.)

To locate store, scan QR code.

## BENGALURU SOUTH CITY CORPORATION

Office of the Executive Engineer, Traffic Engineering and Mobility Cell, 2nd floor, 9th Main Road, Jayanagara 2nd block, Bengaluru -560011

No:EE/TE & M Cell/BSCC/TEND /07/2025-26 Date:27-03-2026

### CORRIGENDUM-1

**Name of the work:** Providing 3 No's Towing vehicles of required capacity as per specification detailed in Bid document complete on hire basis (including vehicle, fuel, driver, helpers and maintenance of vehicle) for Bengaluru South City Corporation (Zone-1)& (Zone-2) for a period of One year.

Ref : 1. Tender Notification No: EE/TE&M Cell/BSCC/ TEND/ 07/2025-26, Date:27-03-2026.

Adverting to the above, following Corrigendum to the above tender work is issued.

**To Be Read As :** (1) Availability of Tender Document in KPPP Portal in **02-04-2026** (2) Date and Time of Pre Bid meeting will be held on **07-04-2026** at **4:00** pm (3) Last date & time for queries (Only Through Online) on **07-04-2026** at **3:00** pm. (4) Last Date & Time for receipt of tenders is **10-04-2026** at **4:00** pm. (5) Opening Technical bid on **13-04-2026** at **4:00** pm. (7) Opening Financial bid (if possible) on **14-04-2026** at **11:30**am.

All the other terms & conditions are remaining unchanged.

**Sd/- Executive Engineer**
**Traffic Engineering and Mobility Cell, BSCC**

## PSPCL Punjab State Power Corporation Limited

**Regd. Office: PSEB Head Office, The Mall, Patiala - 147001**
**Corporate Identity Number U40109PB2010SGC033813**
**Website: www.pspcl.in (Contact No. 96461-22185)**

Tender Enquiry No. 378/SS(D)-II | Dated: 02.04.2026

Dy.CE/Substation Design/ TS Organization, PSPCL, C-1, Shakti Vihar, PSPCL, Patiala invites E-tender for Manufacture, Testing, Supply & Delivery of 100 nos. 66kV $SF_6$ Circuit Breakers. For detailed NIT & Tender Specification, please refer to https://eproc.punjab.gov.in from 02.04.26 (09:00AM onwards).

Note: Corrigendum and amendments, if any, will be published online at https://eproc.punjab.gov.in

C- 447/26, DPR/Pb.:1079/12/2026-27/10115

## Government or Rajasthan
## Local Self Government Department
## (Directorate of Local Bodies, Rajasthan, Jaipur)

**G-3, Rajmahal Residency, Near Civil lines, Railway Crossing, Jaipur**

Tel No.: +91 141 2222469 Fax No.: +91 141 2222403 web site: www.lsg.urban.rajasthan.gov.in

**No: F 55 () PA/CE/DLB/BA2025-26/3inl/2026/5808 Date: 27/03/2026**

### Notice Inviting Bids (NIB)

**UBN No: DLB2526GLOB40561**

Online Technical and Financial Bids in Single Stage two envelops are invited on behalf of Governor of Rajasthan by Directorate of Local Bodies Supply, delivery, commissioning and related services of Truck Chassis Mounted 3 in 1 sewer cleaning (suction, grabbing and jetting with robot and safety accessories) as per bid document for ULBs under Budget announcement year 2025-26 up to 17.04.2026.

Other particulars of the bid may be visited on the Procurement Portal (http://sppp.rajasthan.gov.in , http://eproc.rajasthan.gov.in) of the State; and LSG Department website. The approximate value of the procurement is Rs **98.96 cr.**

DIPR/C/6293/2026

**Director cum Special Secretary**

## JAIPUR CITY TRANSPORT SERVICES LIMITED

No. :- MD/JCTSL/2024-25/D - 3947 Date :- 27/03/2026

### Corrigendum - 03

This is with reference to JCTSL Bid no 07/2025-26 published on **http://sppp.rajasthan.gov.in** UBN No.JCT2526SLOB00009 and **http://eproc.rajasthan.gov.in.** Tender ID 2026_JCTS_532359_1, Some amendments are made. Detail of amendments can be seen and may be downloaded from above mentioned websites and JCTSL Website **(http://transport.rajasthan.gov.in/jctsl).**

**Managing Director**
**JCTSL, Jaipur**

Raj.Samwad/C/26/5

## BANGALORE ELECTRICITY SUPPLY COMPANY LIMITED

(Wholly owned by Government of Karnataka undertaking)
(CIN-U04010KA2002SGC030438)

### BRIEF TENDER NOTIFICATION

**(Through e-procurement)**

BESCOM invites tenders vide Enquiry No: BESCOM/2026-27/ EL/WORK_INDENT1069 through KPP platform from eligible Bidders for "Upgradation of LT Distribution network by replacing existing overhead bare conductor by LT Covered Conductor & LT AB Cable at Nelamangala Division of **Bangalore Rural Circle,** BESCOM for a period of one year on Rate Contract Partial Turnkey Basis."

**Bid Documents available:** 04.04.2026. **Last date for Bid Submission:** 04.05.2026, 17:00 Hrs. **Opening of Bid Document:** 05.05.2026, 17:15 Hrs.

The Tenders can be obtained through KPP portal web-site https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in. Aspiring Bidders need to register on KPP portal. Further Bidders can take assistance with KPP help desk contact numbers (+91-8046010000, +91-8068948777) or email at support@eprochelpdesk.com. Further details can be obtained from the office of the undersigned.

**Sd/-**
**Chief General Manager (Ele.,), Procurement, BESCOM**

For Electricity related complaints call: 1912
Download "BESCOM Mithra" Mobile APP

## Rajasthan State Beverages Corporation Limited

**(A Government of Rajasthan Undertaking)**
**5th Floor, COERRA Bhawan, Near Aranya Bhawan, Jaipur Pin-302004**
**(Ph. 0141-2744231, Fax-0141-2744237, Email - ed.rsbcl@rajasthan.gov.in)**

NIB No. :- 84/2025-26/ Dated :- 31/03/2026

### NOTICE INVITING e-BIDs

e-Bids for Selection of Franchisee of RSBCL for Setting up and Operations of BIO Wholesale Vends in Rajasthan are invited from interested bidders up to 6.00 pm on 30/04/2026. Other particulars of the bid may be downloaded from the procurement portal **https://eproc.rajasthan.gov.in, https://sppp.rajasthan.gov.in** of the state and **https://excise.rajasthan.gov.in.** The approximate value of the procurement is Rs 1.5 Crore.

**UBN No. BCL2526SLOB00085**

Raj.Samwad/C/26/85

**Executive Director**

## KARNATAKA GOVERNOR'S SECRETARIAT

Lok Bhavan, Bengaluru

**No. GS 14 KOM 2025** **Date : 02.04.2026**

### INVITING APPLICATION FOR THE POST OF VICE CHANCELLOR, KARNATAKA STATE OPEN UNIVERSITY, MYSURU

Applications are invited for the post of Vice Chancellor, Karnataka State Open University, Mysuru from eligible Professors. The candidates must have a minimum of 10 years working experience as Professor or equivalent post as per the guidelines of University Grants Commission and Karnataka State Open University Act, 1992 and submit their application furnishing information such as Educational Qualification, Research Academic and Administrative Experience etc., in four sets in the specified format available at website **www.ksoumysuru.ac.in** along with a self declaration to the **"Special Secretary to Governor, P.B. No. 5033, Lok Bhavan, Bengaluru-560001"** by **10.05.2026 before 5.30 P.M.** and a soft copy of the application to be emailed at **us.university.rb@karnataka.gov.in.**

**Sd/-**
**(R. Prabhushankar)**
**Special Secretary to Governor**

DIPR/CP/6496/NR/2025-26

## IDBI BANK LIMITED

**Regd. Off.** IDBI Tower, WTC Complex, Cuffe Parade, Mumbai-400 005
CIN No: L65190MH2004GOI148838

### RFP For Design, Supply, Installation, Testing, Maintenance of Fire Suppression Cylinders at Data Center (DC), Chennai

IDBI Bank invites sealed proposals from eligible bidders for the above RFPs / Solution. Please visit Bank's website **https://www.idbi.bank.in** (Notices & Tenders) for details.

**Note:** Any further Addenda / Corrigenda / Extension of dates / Clarifications / Responses to bidders' queries in respect of the above RFPs shall be posted only on Bank's website and no separate notification shall be issued in the newspapers. Bidders are therefore requested to regularly visit Bank's website to keep themselves updated in this regard.

## DEPARTMENT OF SCHOOL EDUCATION
## GOVERNMENT OF NAGALAND

Request for Expression of Interest for World Bank Aided – Nagaland Education Project-The Lighthouse (NECTAR) for eligible firms with requisite experience and capabilities for the following activity:

1. Hiring of Internal Auditor for Nagaland Education Project-The Lighthouse (NECTAR)
2. Hiring of Consultancy Firm for Impact Assessment of Professional Learning Communities (PLC) and Performance Incentive Grants (PIG)

For more details kindly visit nagalandtenders.gov.in or nagalandeduproject.com

## RAJASTHAN MEDICAL SERVICES CORPORATION LTD.

**(A Govt. of Rajasthan Undertaking), Gandhi Block, Swasthya Bhawan, Tilak Marg, Jaipur-302005, India,**
**Phone No: 0141-2228066, 2228064, Website: www.rmsc.health.rajasthan.gov.in,**
**CIN : U24232RJ2011SGC035067, E-mail : edpssrmsc@rajasthan.gov.in**

Ref No. :- F.8( )/RMSCL/EPM/NIB/2025/1905 Dated :- 24/03/2026

### Notice Inviting E-Bids

Sealed Single Stage Two- envelopes unconditional online Bids for Two Year Rate Contract, are invited on behalf of the Governor of Rajasthan for the procurement of Goods as listed below, from Manufacturer /Direct Importer as per the Bidding Schedule given below:

| S. No. | Item Name/Description | Ref. No. | UBN | Estimated Value Rs. in Crore | Last Time & Last date for bid submission |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | 3 part CBC Analyzer | F-8() RMSC/EPM/M-4/ NIB-944/2025-26/1867 | MSC2526GLOB00097 | 75,00,00,000/- | 30.04.2026 Up to 6.00 PM |
| 2. | Semi Auto Analyzer | F-8() RMSC/EPM/M-4/ NIB-945/2025-26/1866 | MSC2526GLOB00098 | 50,00,00,000/- | 30.04.2026 Up to 6.00 PM |

Other particulars of the bids may be visited on the procurement portal **http://sppp.rajasthan.gov.in, http://eproc.rajasthan.gov.in, http://rmsc.health.rajasthan.gov.in** and may be downloaded from there.

Raj.Samwad/C/26/34

**Executive Director (EPM)**
**RMSCL**

## WESTERN RAILWAY

**Material Management Department**

**VARIOUS MATERIALS SUPPLY**

**E-PROCUREMENT TENDER NOTICE No. S/16/2026 Date 27.03.2026**

| S.N. | Tender No | Short Description of items | Quantity | T.O.D. |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 99 | 26267010 | Running Contract of One Year for Supply of 6400 mm Over-Riding Right Hand Derailing Switch to RDSO Drawing No.T6068 Alt. 5 or latest Alt | 126 Set | 29-Apr-26 |
| 100 | 22255144A | 5400 KVA Loco Main Transformer Complete | 2 Nos | 28-Apr-26 |
| 101 | 22252487A | Set of Battery Boxes with mounting arrangement | 83 Set | 28-Apr-26 |
| 102 | 04255176A | Supply, Installation, testing and commissioning of Aerosol based fire | 6903 Set | 28-Apr-26 |
| 103 | 26261008 | Running contract of one year for Supply of 1 in 12 Weldable CMS Crossing for BG 60E1 Rail section and R260 Grade on PSC Sleepers to RDSO Drg. No.T-6412 | 1100 Set | 28-Apr-26 |
| 104 | 04251713A | Anaerobic Microbial Inoculums (seeding Bacteria) for IR-DRDO Bio Toilet Tanks | 647958 Ltr | 27-Apr-26 |
| 105 | 27268150 | Rate contract for procurement of Spares of Plasser make Track Machines for POH planned for the Year 2026-27 & 2027-28 | 1 Set | 27-Apr-26 |
| 106 | 22265005 | Supply and commissioning of Micro Controller Based Electronic Speed Indicating and Recording System | 86 Set | 27-Apr-26 |
| 107 | 26261009 | Running Contract of One Year for Supply of 1 in 8.5 Weldable CMS Crossing RDSO Drg. No.T6441 | 160 Set | 27-Apr-26 |

Regarding detailed notice EMD, Purchase restrictions and detailed tender conditions, please visit website **www.ireps.gov.in and wr.indianrailways.gov.in.** 1274

Like us on: facebook.com/WesternRly • Follow us on: X.com/WesternRly

## KARNATAKA INDUSTRIAL AREAS DEVELOPMENT BOARD

**(A Government of Karnataka Undertaking)**
**No.2, 2/1 and 2/3, Kalidasa Marg, 1st Main Road, Gandhinagar**
**Bengaluru - 560 009. Phone No. 080-22265383, website: www.kiadb.in**

**No. IADB/ENGG/ETND-EP-01/04/2026-27 Date: 01.04.2026**

### NOTICE INVITING TENDER

**(Through GOK Karnataka Public Procurement Portal Only)**

Item Rate Tender under two cover bid system is invited as per the Karnataka Transparency Public Procurement Act 1999 and Rules 2000 through electronic procurement from eligible KPWD Class-1 (Civil) Contractors who have got adequate financial resources, state of the art technology, suitable construction equipments, technical man power & sufficient past experience in the following work :

**Name of the Work :** Establishment of Knowledge, Wellbeing and Innovation City (KWIN City) of Phase-4 & Phase-5, Doddaballapura & Nelamangala Taluk, Bengaluru Rural District

The last date and time of receipt of tender is : **02.05.2026** upto **4.00 pm.**

Applicants May Download Bidding Documents from the Karnataka Public Procurement Portal **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in.**

**Sd/-**
**Chief Engineer-1, KIADB Bengaluru**

DIPR/CP /19/Zen/2026-27

## NAFED

*60 Years in Service*

**NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL COOPERATIVE MARKETING FEDERATION OF INDIA LTD.**

5-10-193, HACA Bhawan, 2nd Floor, Opp. Public gardens, Hyderabad – 500004 Tel No: 23235371
Email: nafhyd@nafed-india.com website: www.nafed-india.com

### TENDER NOTICE FOR SALE OF IRON AND STEEL STOCK LYING IN TELANGANA STATE

Nafed Hyderabad invites bids for sale of Iron and Steel stock lying at Bollaram, Hyderabad in the State of Telangana through e-auction platform of MSTC. Interested buyers may visit MSTC's website **www.mstcecommerce.com/auctionhome** for the stock location and sale procedure.

**State Head**

## GOVERNMENT OF KARNATAKA
## PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT
(www.kpwd.gov.in)

**Office of the Executive Engineer, PWD Bangalore Division,** 2nd Floor, PWD Annexure Building, K.R. Circle, Bangalore - 01
**Telephone No.** 080-22133370, **Email ID:** eepwdbngdn@yahoo.com
**E-Portal :** https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in/#/portal/portal-home

**Short Term Tender Notification No. 69/2025-26 DATED: 31.03.2026**

Item-rate tenders, for the work in PWD, Devanahalli Sub Division under this office noted below, are invited by the undersigned on behalf of the Governor of Karnataka in accordance with Karnataka Transparency in Public Procurement rules 2000 and as per Standard Tender Documents for procurement of works from the contractors registered in K.P.W.D. as per KPPP.

Tender Notification are Published for 01 Work **(Rs. 100.00 Lakhs)** Details of the tender works can be obtained from the above Office during office hours on working days. EMD & Tender processing fees are mentioned in KPP portal.

1. Tenders must be submitted online through KPP portal on or before **4.00 PM on Dated: 08.04.2026**
2. The opening of tenders through KPP portal on Dated: **09.04.2026 at 4.30 PM** or further date and time will be Intimate.

**Sd/-**
**Executive Engineer**
**PWD, Bangalore Division, Bangalore.**

DIPR/CP/03/ Zen/2026-27

## ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ಸರ್ಕಾರ

ಆರೋಗ್ಯ ಮತ್ತುಕುಟುಂಬ ಕಲ್ಯಾಣ ಇಲಾಖೆ
ಜಿಲ್ಲಾ ಅಂಧತ್ವ ನಿವಾರಣಾಧಿಕಾರಿಗಳ ಕಛೇರಿ ವಿಜಯನಗರ
ಜಿಲ್ಲೆ,ಹೊಸಪೇಟೆ–583201 ದೂರವಾಣಿ ಸಂಖ್ಯೆ : 9449842086
ಈಮೇಲ್:dlovijayanagara@gmail.com

ಸಂಖ್ಯೆ:ಜಿ.ಆ.ನಿ.ಕಾ/262/2025–26 ದಿನಾಂಕ:27.03.2026

### -: E-TENDER NOTIFICATION: -

District Health and Family Welfare Officer Vijayanagar inviting e-tender as per KTPP act for Providing Expression of Interest (EoI) for 88. FMR CODE, 88.11 cataract surgeries from eligible service providers who are registered as Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs)/Voluntary Organizations/ Charitable Trusts/Hospitals to provide cataract surgery services at the district level under the National Programmefor Control of Blindness & Visual Impairment (NPCB&VI) and National Health Mission (NHM) Approximate Cost of Tender Rs.70.00Lakhs **(DHFWS/2025-26/PREQUAL_TENDER_NUMBER_90)**

Interested eligible Tenderers can upload the document between date:31-03-2026 to date: 15-04-2026 time up to 05:00 pm.

**Sd/- District Blindness Controle Officer, Vijayanagar.**

DIPR/Vijayanagar/2026-27/KSMCA/RO No/03

## National Dairy Development Board

**PB No. 40, Anand, Gujarat-388001, Tel: 02692-260 148/149/160 Fax: 02692-260 159**
**Website: http://www.nddb.coop, Email: purchase@nddb.coop**
**INVITATION FOR BIDS (IFB) / LOCAL COMPETITIVE BIDDING (LCB)**

**Bids are invited on behalf of Service Recipients/ NDDB from eligible bidders for the works listed below:**

| Sl. No. | Description of works / Bid Reference | Estd. Cost (₹) incl GST/Duration | Event Start / Close Date | Bid submission / opening date & time |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| A | **Civil, Structural, Water Supply, Sanitary & Other Misc. works including Internal Electrification works for:** | | | |
| I | 4 LLPD Dairy, 30 MTPD SMP & 200 TPD CFP - Kuppam, Andhra Pradesh. **NDDB/HO/Purchase/1/26-27/ET/1[Civil II-Kuppam]** | 9000 Lakh / 15 Months | 08.04.26 29.04.26 | 29.04.26 15:00 hrs. 29.04.26 15:30 hrs. |
| B | **Design, Supply, Installation, Testing and Commissioning of the following:** | | | |
| I | 30 MTPD SMP Powder Plant at Kuppam, Andhra Pradesh. **NDDB/HO/Purchase/2/26-27/ET/2[PP-Kuppam]** | 3000 Lakh / 15 Months | 03.04.26 24.04.26 | 24.04.26 15:00 hrs. 24.04.26 15:30 hrs. |
| II | 200 TPD (Exp. to 400 TPD) Cattle Feed Plant at Kuppam, Andhra Pradesh. **NDDB/HO/Purchase/3/26-27/ET/3[CFP-Kuppam]** | 2300 Lakh / 12 Months | 07.04.26 28.04.26 | 28.04.26 15:00 hrs. 28.04.26 15:30 hrs. |
| III | 11KV /433 V sub-station at Davanagere, Karnataka. **NDDB/HO/Purchase/4/26-27/ET/4[Substation-Davanagere]** | 412 Lakh / 08 Months | 02.04.26 23.04.26 | 23.04.26 15:00 hrs. 23.04.26 15:30 hrs. |
| IV | Process vessels & transfer lines for Vaccine Facility, OBPI Berhampur (Odisha) **NDDB/HO/Purchase/5/26-27/ET/5[EQPT-Berhampur]** | 700 Lakh / 06 Months | 07.04.26 28.04.26 | 28.04.26 15:00 hrs. 28.04.26 15:30 hrs. |
| V | 11KV /433 V sub-station at FPP, Amritsar, Punjab. **NDDB/HO/Purchase/6/26-27/ET/6[Substation-Amritsar]** | 330 Lakh / 08 Months | 02.04.26 23.04.26 | 23.04.26 15:00 hrs. 23.04.26 15:30 hrs. |
| VI | Refrigeration system for Cold stores at Davanagere, Karnataka. **NDDB/HO/Purchase/7/26-27/ET/7[Refri II-Davangere]** | 1850 Lakh / 12 Months | 03.04.26 24.04.26 | 24.04.26 15:00 hrs. 24.04.26 15:30 hrs. |

For further details pertaining to IFB and for downloading the bid document, please visit these websites: **www.nddb.coop** and **www.mstcecommerce.com/eprocn** For any clarification please contact **Group Head (Purchase), NDDB, Anand**-388001.
**NB: Any corrigendum/modification etc. will be posted only on these websites.**

## RAIL WHEEL FACTORY

Yelahanka, Bangalore - 560064
**web site: www.rwf.indianrailways.gov.in**

**Tender Notice No. RWF/S/P2/22/2025-26 Dated 30/03/2026**

On behalf of the President of India, the Principal Chief Materials Manager invites Electronic Open Tender from experienced OEMs or their authorised agents for supply of the following item, on the Indian Railways e-portal www.ireps.gov.in.

**Sl. No.:** 1. **Tender Number:** P2255929B. **Brief Item Description: Design, supply, erection, testing & commissioning of Electrically Operated Industrial Passenger Cum Goods Lift/Elevator having load carrying capacity minm. 1000Kgs (Capacity of 4 passengers) as per RWF Specification. Quantity: 2 Nos. Tender Closing Date and Time: 23/04/2026 14:00 hrs.** Tender details can be viewed on our website www.rwf.indianrailways.gov.in or www.ireps.gov.in. The tender documents and the corrigendum to the Tender if any, will be available on the portal only.

**Principal Chief Materials Manager**

## S. E. RAILWAY – TENDER

Chief Project Manager (GSU), Chakradharpur, S. E. Railway acting for and on behalf of President of India invites E-Tenders against Open Tender : **Tender Notice No. : CKP-GSU-FENCING -26-27-1; Name of work** : "Provision of safety fencing along the track by Metal Beam Crash Barriers, fixed knots fencing Bezinal-2000, Prestressed concrete and brick work with RCC column from km233.880 to 515.117 (281.237 Tr.km.-(-) 13.57 Tkm(i) Bondamunda A cabin to D cabin and Bondamunda A 4.25 Tkm) (ii) Sonakhan-Sogra ( 5.0Tkm) (iii) Bagdehi-Dhutra (4.32 Tkm) between Asanboni Jharsuguda station"; **Tender Value** : ₹ 193,55,34,078.71; **EMD** : ₹ 3,87,10,700.00; **Cost of Tender form** : ₹ 0.00; **Date of opening** : 24/04/2026; **Period of Completion** : 12 months; The tender can be viewed at website **http://www.ireps/gov.in**. The tenderer /bidders must have class-III Digital Signature Certificate and must be registered under on IREPS Portal. Only registered tenderer/ bidder can participate on e-tendering. All relevant paper must be uploaded at the time of participating in e-tendering. Manual offers are not allowed against this tender, and any such manual offer received shall be ignored. **NOTE:-** e-Tender forms shall be issued free of cost to all tenderers. (Authority-Rly.Bd's letter No.2020/CE-I/CT/3E/GCC/Policy dtd. 16.07.2020).

**(PR- 01)**

The Divisional Railway Manager (Engg), S.E. Rly. Ranchi acting for and on behalf of the President of India invites e-tender for the following work : **Sl. No.; Notice No.; Name of work; Tender value & EMD value** respectively : **(1); DRMENGGRNC-18-2026;** Construction of RUB in connection with major redevelopment of Hatia Station; ₹ 33,74,98,364.69; ₹ 67,50,000.00; **(2); DRMENGGRNC-19-2026;** Construction of 04 units type-II quarters at Bano station of Hatia-Orga section; ₹ 1,62,40,516.28; ₹ 3,24,900.00; **Tender closing date and time :** 21.04.2026 at 15.00 hrs. (for Sl. No. 1 &2). Tenderers can visit the website **www.ireps.gov.in** for online tendering.

**(PR- 10)**

## RAIL COACH FACTORY KAPURTHALA

On-line bids are invited by PCMM, RCF on behalf of President of India for following items:-

| Sr. No. | Tender No. & Due Date | Description | | Quantity | EMD (Rs.) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | 17261118 17.04.2026 | FRP MODULAR TOILET PRE ASSEMBLED WITHOUT LAVATORY BOWL FACING (DRG.NO. 1 10113.0.30.095.002 ALT A) FOR LHB NON AC CHAIR CAR COACHES (390 LITRE). | | 39 Set | 189410 |
| 2. | 17261135 20.04.2026 | SET OF FRP SIDE WALL PANELS FOR LHB AC2T COACHES | | 32 Set | 770180 |
| | | SET OF FRP SIDE WALL PANELS FOR LHB SLR HOG COACHES (31-SEATER) | | 118 Set | |
| | | SET OF SIDE WALL PANELS FOR LHB FIRST AC COACHES. | | 21 Set | |
| 3. | 17261125 29.04.2026 | Set of Seat and Berth for L.H.B SLR Amrit Bharat Coaches. | | 15 Set | 1,30,230.00 |
| 4. | 05252049E 27.04.2026 | Pront Part | | 10 Set | Nil |
| 5. | 12251356B 30.04.2026 | 1. SUPPLY OF ONE COACH SET OF ALUMINIUM EXTRUSION/ MOULDING FOR LHB SCN AMRIT BHARAT COACHES | | 182 Set | 2000000 |
| | | 2. SUPPLY OF ONE COACH SET OF ALUMINIUM EXTRUSIONS/ MOULDINGS FOR LHB SLR AMRIT BHARAT COACHES | | 38 Set | |
| | | 3. SUPPLY OF ONE COACH SET OF ALUMINIUM EXTRUSIONS/ MOULDINGS FOR LHB GS AMRIT BHARAT COACHES | | 258 Set | |
| 6. | 05261196 30.04.2026 | SET OF CARLINE WITH HL3 FEATURE FOR SCN COACH | PL NO. 33553403 | 72 Set | 123190 |

**CORRIGENDUM**

**1. Tender No.** 14251110A, **Due date:** To be read as 07.04.2026 instead of 27.03.2026; **2. Tender No.** 13255417; **Due date:** To be read as 02.04.2026 instead of 27.03.2026; **3. Tender No.** 05261047; **Description:** Supply and Apply (Installation, Commissioning & Testing) of 3- Types of Axle Mounted Disc Brake Systems With EP Assist Brake Systems For Amrit Bharat Coaches. **Due date:** To be read as 16.04.2026 instead of 17.04.2026; **4. Tender No.** 17261004, **Due date:** To be read as 07.04.2026 instead of 30.03.2026; **Description/ Drawings is modified for all items. Estimated Rates of Items:** Revised for all Items. **5. Tender No.** 17261006, **Due date:** To be read as 07.04.2026 instead of 30.03.2026; **Description/ Drawings is modified for all items. Estimated Rates of Items:** Revised for all Items

1. For details and making On-line Bids, visit Website **http://ireps.gov.in.** Drawings/specifications, wherever required can be downloaded from RCF Website **http://www.rcf.indianrailways.gov.in** Class III- digital signature certificate required for on-line bidding, can be obtained from licensed certifying agencies listed at website **http://www.cca.gov.in 2.** Tenders will close at 14.25 hrs. on due date and will be opened at 14.30 hrs. S.No 1 to 3, 5 & 6 opened at RCF/Kapurthala and S.No. 4 Tender will opened at Tilak Bridge New Delhi; **3.** For queries, contact IREPS Helpdesk at 011-24102855, 011-24105180 or RCF helpdesk at 011-23378658

**PCMM**

**NO. 001-S/2025-26** **Dated: 01.04.2026**

## GOVERNMENT OF KARNATAKA
## KARNATAKA FOREST DEPARTMENT
## ASSISTANT CONSERVATOR OF FORESTS, VIJAYAPUR SUB DIVISION, VIJAYAPUR

NO: B1/BUD/VJP/OUTSOURCE TENDER/2025-26

DATE: 27.03.2026

### SHORT TENDER NOTIFICATION

Tenders have been invited from eligible contractors through e-procurement website vide Indent No.: KFD/2025-26/SE1748 for providing the manpower service on the basis of outsource, for the work of Data Entry Operator, Driver and Day / Night Watchman in Vijayapura Territorial Division forest office and Range offices for the year 2026-27. Tenders will be opened till 15-04-2026 and technical bid will be opened on 17-04-2026 at 11.00 AM and financial bid will be opened on 18-04-2026 at 11.00 AM. Interested parties can apply for the tender as per the tender specifications through kppp.karnataka.gov.in.

**Sd/- Assistant Conservator of Forests**
**Vijayapur Sub-Division, Vijayapur**

ವಾಸಾಸಂಇ/ವಿಜಯಪುರ/848/ಕೆಎಸ್ಎಂಸಿಎ/2025–26

## BANGALORE WATER SUPPLY AND SEWERAGE BOARD

### INVITATION FOR TENDER

**(Only Through KPP Portal)**

BWSSB invites Tenders in Two Stage Tender System from registered Contractors for the following works.

**Office of the Engineer in Chief , 2nd Floor, Cauvery Bhavana, KG Road, Bengaluru- 560 009.**

| Sl No. | Name of the Works | Amount put to Tender / EMD Amount |
|---|---|---|
| | **No:BWSSB/EIC/ACE(UFW)/TA(UFW)/10012/2026-27** | **Dated:31.03.2026** |
| 1. | Repair, Replacement of EMF flow meters at North East Zone and various locations coming under AEE(UFW) Sub division. | ₹ 395.32 Lakhs / ₹ 5.93 Lakhs |
| | **No:BWSSB/EIC/ACE(CS&DCW)/TA/10014/2026-27** | **Dated:31.03.2026** |
| 2. | Work of Modernization & Remodeling of Water Supply System in Frazer Town-6 under AEE(C-1-2) Sub-Division Limits of BWSSB, Bengaluru | ₹ 378.62 Lakhs / ₹ 5.68 Lakhs |
| | **No:BWSSB/EIC/ACE(UFW)/TA(UFW)/10017/2026-27** | **Dated:31.03.2026** |
| 3. | Repair, Replacement of EMF flow meters at North West Zone and various locations coming under AEE(UFW) Sub division. | ₹ 396.32 Lakhs / ₹ 5.95 Lakhs |

For all the above works Last date and time for Receipt of tenders is on **16.04.2026** upto **16:00** hours. The Technical bids will be opened on **17.04.2026** after **16:30** hours.

**Sd/-**
**Engineer-in-Chief**

**Office of the Chief Engineer (West), 6th Floor, Cauvery Bhavana, KG Road, Bengaluru- 560 009.**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| | **No:BWSSB/EIC/CE(W)/ACE(W)-2/DCE(M)-2/TA(W)/10009/2026-27** | **Dated:31.03.2026** |
| 4. | work of Construction of 5.0 Lakh Litres Sump Cum Pump House, 130 HP Submersible HSC Pump set, 350 mm dia DI rising main, Construction of 5.0 Lakh Litres OHT and allied works coming under NW1 Division. (3rd Call) | ₹ 711.69 Lakhs / ₹ 10.68 Lakhs |

Last date and time for Receipt of tenders is on **16.04.2026** upto **17:00** hours. The Technical bids will be opened on **17.04.2026** after **17:30** hours.

**Sd/-**
**Chief Engineer (West)**

The details regarding participation in the e-procurement portal process can be obtained by logging on to **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in** For further details contact the above signed office during working hours.

DIPR/CP/13/CCL/2026-27

## ನಗರಸಭಾ ಕಾರ್ಯಾಲಯ, ಹರಿಹರ–577601

ಫೋ:08192–244266 **ka.harihar.cmc@gmail.com**

ನಂ.ನಸಹ/ತಾಂತ್ರಿಕ/ಐಎಫ್ಟಿ–27/2025–26 ದಿನಾಂಕ: 31–03–2026

### ಅಲ್ಪಾವಧಿ ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಪ್ರಕಟಣೆ

2021–22ನೇ ಸಾಲಿನ 15ನೇ ಹಣಕಾಸು ನಿರ್ಧಿಂದಿತ ನಿಧಿ ಯೋಜನೆಯಡಿ ಕಾಮಗಾರಿಗೆ ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ಸಾರ್ವಜನಿಕ ಸಂಗ್ರಹಣೆಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಪಾರದರ್ಶಕತೆ ಅದೇಶ–1999–2000ರ Act 2000ರ ನಿಯಮದಂತೆ ಸ್ಟ್ಯಾಂಡರ್ಡ್ ಬಿಡ್ ಡಾಕ್ಯುಮೆಂಟ್ ಕೆಡಬ್ಲ್ಯೂ–3ರ ನಿಯಮದನ್ವಯ ಈ ಕೆಳಗಿನಂತೆ ಇಂಡೆಂಟ್ ನಂಬರ್‌ಗೆ ನೀಡಲಾದ ಕಾಮಗಾರಿಗಳನ್ನು ವಿದ್ಯುತ್ ಪರಿವೀಕ್ಷಣಾ ಇಲಾಖೆಯ ನೋಂದಾಯಿತರಾದ ಅರ್ಹ ಗುತ್ತಿಗೆದಾರರಿಂದ/ ಏಜೆನ್ಸಿದಾರರು ಕೆ.ಪಿ.ಪಿ ಪೋರ್ಟಲ್ ಮುಖಾಂತರ ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಆಹ್ವಾನಿಸಲಾಗಿದ್ದು, ಇಚ್ಛೆಯುಳ್ಳ ಗುತ್ತಿಗೆದಾರರು ಈ ಕೆಳಗಿನ ಕಾಮಗಾರಿಗಳಿಗೆ ತಮ್ಮ ದರಗಳನ್ನು KPP ಪೋರ್ಟಲ್ ಮುಖಾಂತರ ಸಲ್ಲಿಸಲು ಕೋರಿದೆ. ಗುತ್ತಿಗೆದಾರರು ತಮಗೆ ಅನ್ವಯಿಸುವ ಟೆಂಡರ್ ದಾಖಲೆಗಳನ್ನು https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in ವೆಬ್‌ಸೈಟ್ ಮೂಲಕ ಪಡೆದುಕೊಂಡು ಭರ್ತಿ ಮಾಡಿದ ಟೆಂಡರ್‌ಗಳನ್ನು https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in ವೆಬ್‌ಸೈಟ್ ಮೂಲಕ ಸಲ್ಲಿಸಬಹುದು ಹಾಗೂ ಹೆಚ್ಚಿನ ಮಾಹಿತಿಯನ್ನು ತಾಂತ್ರಿಕ ಶಾಖೆ ನಗರಸಭೆ, ಹರಿಹರ ಇವರಿಂದ ಪಡೆಯಬಹುದಾಗಿದೆ.

(1) ಕೆ.ಪಿ.ಪಿ ಪೋರ್ಟಲ್ ಮುಖಾಂತರ ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಸಲ್ಲಿಸಲು ಕೊನೆಯ ದಿನಾಂಕ: 15–04–2026 ರಂದು ಸಾಯಂಕಾಲ 5.00 ಗಂಟೆಯವರೆಗೆ (2) ಕೆ.ಪಿ.ಪಿ ಪೋರ್ಟಲ್ ಮುಖಾಂತರ ತಾಂತ್ರಿಕ ಬಿಡ್ ತೆರೆಯುವ ದಿನಾಂಕ: 16–04–2026 ರಂದು ಸಾಯಂಕಾಲ 5.30 ಗಂಟೆಗೆ ಇಂಡೆಂಟ್ ನಂಬರ್:–

(1) DMA/2025-26/EL/WORK_INDENT 56264 ಅಂದಾಜು ಮೊತ್ತ–80.00 ಲಕ್ಷ.

ಸಹಿ/– ಆಡಳಿತಾಧಿಕಾರಿಗಳು, ನಗರಸಭೆ, ಹರಿಹರ.

ಸಹಿ/–ಪೌರಾಯುಕ್ತರು, ನಗರಸಭೆ, ಹರಿಹರ.

ವಾಸಾಇ/ಡಿಪಿಜಿ/08/ಕೆಎಸ್ಎಂಸಿಎ/2026–27

# Maha launches birth control drugs for leopards

Sandip.Dighe
@timesofindia.com

**Pune:** To regulate the population of leopards in an area long affected by human-animal conflict, the Maharashtra govt's forest department has launched a pilot project for immuno-contraception of the big cats at Manikdoh Leopard Rescue Centre in Junnar tehsil, about 100km from Pune.

"Five female leopards were identified and housed at the rescue centre over the last few months. They are under close observation, after approved contraceptive drugs were administered to prevent ovulation. Periodic blood sampling will be conducted to assess physiological responses and evaluate the effectiveness of the treatment," a forest official said.

The project was approved by the drug controller general of India and the environment ministry granted statutory clearance. It is being implemented in collaboration with the Indian Council of Medical Research. Given the complexity and novelty of the intervention, it is too early to draw conclusions on the project, officials said.

Former state principal chief conservator of forests (wildlife) Sunil Limaye said, "Immuno-contraception prevents ovulation in female leopards through scientifically approved drugs. It is practised globally and does not harm the animals." He described the initiative as a significant step towards sustainable wildlife management.

Limaye said such projects typically run for at least two to three years. Initially, the treated female leopards are kept in isolation. Later, they are allowed to mate. The objective is considered achieved if mating does not lead to conception.

# Record-breaking price for painting reaffirms timeless value of Indian art

▸ Continued from page 1

Painted in the 1890s, at the height of Varma's powers, Yashoda and Krishna renders a tender, layered portrait of maternal love through the mythological figures of infant Krishna and his foster mother Yashoda.

One of the artist's most celebrated compositions, it had carried a pre-sale estimate of Rs 80 crore-120 crore — a figure the final hammer price more than doubled.

### 'A defining moment'

Saffronart president and co-founder Minal Vazirani hailed it as a defining moment: "Great art has a way of reaffirming its timeless value. This is not just a milestone for the market — it is a powerful reminder of the enduring cultural and emotional resonance of Indian art."

# After LIC plaint, CBI files fresh FIR against Anil Ambani, co

**New Delhi:** CBI has filed a fresh FIR against **Anil Ambani** and Reliance Communications besides some yet-to-be identified bank officials on a complaint from LIC alleging wrongful loss of Rs 3,750 crore.

The case was registered on April 1 for offences of conspiracy, cheating, misappropriation and offences under Prevention of Corruption Act.

"It has been alleged that the LIC was fraudulently induced to subscribe to Non Convertible Debentures (NCDs) worth Rs 4,500 crore on the basis of false representations made by M/s Reliance Communications Ltd and its management regarding financial health of the company, and security and asset cover offered to LIC while subscribing NCDs," the CBI said in a statement.

LIC, the CBI claimed, had made this complaint on basis of a forensic audit report dated Oct 15, 2020 which alleged that RCOM and its management had resorted to misuse of funds raised from banks and financial institutions and routed funds through subsidiaries. This is the fourth FIR filed against Anil Ambani by the agency. TNN


**PUBLIC NOTICE**

Notice is hereby given to the General public that our clients intends to purchase the immovable properties property bearing old Sy. No. 7, new Sy. No. 7/1, measuring 2 Acres 16.12 guntas and property bearing old Sy, No. 8, new Sy. No. 8/2, measuring 20 guntas and 20 guntas totally measuring 1 Acer, All the properties are situated at Bhuvanahalli Village, Kasaba Hobli, Devanahalli Taluk, described in the Schedule hereunder from its owner Mr. Kishore Kumar S/o Mangilal.

Any person/s , financial Intuitions or entities having any claim, rights, interest, lien, charge, mortgage, lease, tenancy or any objection whatsoever in respect of the schedule properties are hereby called upon to notify the same in writing to the undersigned Advocate, along with supporting documentary Evidence, within 7 (seven) days from the date of publication of this notice.

If no such claim or objection is received within the Stipulated period, it shall be presumed that the properties is free from all encumbrances and our client shall proceed to complete the transaction. Any claims received thereafter shall not be entertained.

**SCHEDULE PROPERTIES :**

1. All that piece and parcel of the property bearing old Sy. No. 7, new Sy. No. 7/1, measuring 2 Acres 16.12 guntas, situated at Bhuvanahalli Village, Kasaba Hobli, Devanahalli Taluk, and bounded on the:
East by : National Highway No. 7,
West by : Sri Vishweshwaraiah's Property,
North by : Private Property bearing Sy.No. 8,
South by : Remaining land in Sy. No. 7.
2. All that piece and parcel of the property bearing old Sy. No. 8, new Sy. No. 8/2, measuring 20 guntas, situated at Bhuvanahalli Village, Kasaba Hobli, Devanahalli Taluk, and bounded on the:
East by : formerly Railway Property presently Road (N.H. 7),
West by : Sri Vishweshwaraiah's Property,
North by : Sri. Subba Reddy's Property,
South by : Property bearing Sy. No. 7 belongs to Kishore Kumar.
3. All that piece and parcel of the property bearing old Sy. No. 8, new Sy. No. 8/2, measuring 20 guntas, situated at Bhuvanahalli Village, Kasaba Hobli, Devanahalli Taluk, and bounded on the:
East by : formerly Railway Property presently Road (N.H. 7),
West by : Sri Vishweshwaraiah's Property,
North by : Remaining land in Sy. No. 8,
South by : Property bearing Sy. No. 8 belongs to Kishore Kumar.

**D. A. SHIVAKUMAR**, ADVOCATE
No. 278, 4th Floor, SaiPranam's Building, Kogilu Cross, Yelahanka, Bengaluru-560064 Mobile – 9844187005.
E-mail: dashivakumar204@gmail.com



**ADVERTISEMENT**

Indian Potash Limited, Distillery Plant Rohana Kalan, Muzaffarnagar District, Uttar Pradesh State is interested in purchasing 3000 MT Indian Coal as per following specifications. Interested parties are advised to quote their rate for a minimum quantity of 500 MT FOR plant, Month wise supply quantity with all their credentials along with a security deposit of Rs.5.00,000/-(Rupees Five Lakhs only) by demand draft in favour of Indian Potash Limited, New Delhi and send the same in a sealed cover to our Rohana Kalan Distillery, Muzaffarnagar Plant within 7 days of this publication.

**Specification:-** Carbon % weight -39.90, Hydrogen % weight-2.48, Oxygen % weight -6.76, Nitrogen % weight-0.67, Sulphur % weight-0.38, H2O % weight-10, Mineral Matter % weight -39.81, Total 100, GCV Kcal/KG 4000, Coal Size <150 MM to 175 MM (If coal size below 150 MM, material not accepted. Slates & Fines- Not acceptable in coal
**Requirement:-** GSTIN Certificate, Balance Sheet of Three Years, Min. Turnover: 5-10 Cr., List of Reputed Clients.



MSME-TECHNOLOGY DEVELOPMENT CENTRE
एमएसएमई प्रौद्योगिकी विकास केंद्र
Process & Product Development Centre
प्रक्रिया एवं उत्पाद विकास केंद्र
An Autonomous body under Ministry of MSME, Govt of India
Foundry Nagar, Agra - 282006 (U.P.)
Extension Centre New Delhi Organizes

**Online One Month Internship on Research**

**WHO SHOULD ATTEND :** Students (UG and PG), Research Scholars, Junior Research Fellow, Senior Research Fellow, Research Associate, Faculty, Scientist, Industrialist

**Benefits of the participants: :** • Find a problem statement for their research • Learn to write thesis • Write technical and literature review article • Learn research tools • Research Software • Effective publication

Date/ दिनांक: 13th April to 13th May, 2026 | Fees/ शुल्क: Rs.1500/- only
Time/ समय: 6:00 PM to 7:30 PM | For Inquiry Call Between 9:00 AM to 6:00 PM
For More Details, Course Content and Online Registration
Contact Number - 7983607199, 9810371728, 9677692445
E-mail- kathir.r@dcmsme.gov.in , msmeppdcdelhi@gmail.com
Certificate will be awarded



MSME TECHNOLOGY DEVELOPMENT CENTRE
Process and Product Development Centre
Extension Centre - Coimbatore Organizes
Online Training Program On
**SOLAR ENERGY & BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES**
(Subsidies & Smart Technologies)

**Course Content:** Introduction to Solar Energy, Global market demand, Radiation, Optimization, Site assessment, Shadow Analysis, PV Module Detail Engineering, Inverter, DC and AC Junction Box, Site Safety, Installation Procedures and Maintenance, How to setup a Business, Vendor Registration, Subsidiaries PM-Surya Ghar Scheme, Follow up Local State Govt. Bodies.

For Registration

Date: 06th - 10th April 2026 | Time: 06.00 P.M - 09.00 P.M
Fees: 4,130/- (Inclusive of GST) | Duration: (5 Days Course)
Contact: 9600776611, 8667359360, 7358887633
Visit us at:www.ppdcagra.dcmsme.gov.in
E- Certificate will be Awarded
Disclaimer: Be aware of fraudulent activities. We never ask to make payment on any personal account.



Government of India
सूक्ष्म, लघु और मध्यम उद्यम मंत्रालय
आयोजित करता इंडो जर्मन टूल रूम इंदौर
Government Certificate course on
आर्टिफिशियल इंटेलिजन्स फॉर आर्किटेक्चर अँड इंटेरियर्स
**Artificial Intelligence for Architecture and Interiors**

Course Timing 7.00 pm to 9.00 pm | ऑनलाइन ONLINE | Date-6 April 2026 to 10 April 2026 Course Duration: 5 Days

Email ID: trg@igtr-indore.com website: igtr-indore.com Phone: (0731) 4210700/709

Contact:* Introduction to AI from basic to advanced concepts * Making AI powered designs - sketches, 3D and more * Space Optimization and Utilization * AI-Enhanced Building Information Modeling (BIM) * Automated Documentation and Cost Estimation * AI-Powered Visualization and Rendering * Predictive Risk and Structural Health Analysis * Urban Data Analytics and Smart City Planning * Ethics, Bias, and Responsible AI Use in Architecture * Future-Proofing Architecture with AI Skills * Universal AI AGENT for architectural tasks* and much more

With hands on practical
Course Fees- 4000/-+18% GST (Fees are not refundable)
For whom-people form Architect, Interior designer, Contractors, builder's industry & other interested candidates
फॉर्म्स सफलतापूर्वक भरे जाने पर प्रमाण पत्र जारी किया जाएगा।
हमें कॉल करें / Call us between 10 am to 6 pm
Contact:9403566219,8007765693,7823083980,9584817708
QR Code for Registration



**National Highways Authority of India**
(Ministry of Road Transport and Highways)

भर्ती सूचना / RECRUITMENT NOTICE

भारतीय राष्ट्रीय राजमार्ग प्राधिकरण (भा.रा.रा.प्रा.), **संयुक्त सलाहकार (पर्यावरण और वृक्षारोपण) के 01 पद*** क्षेत्रीय कार्यालय उत्तराखण्ड के लिए **संविदा आधार पर** आवेदन आमंत्रित करता है।

NHAI invites applications for **01 post*** of **Joint Advisor (Environment & Plantation)** for Regional Office Uttarakhand **on contract basis.**

*पदों की संख्या प्राधिकरण की आवश्यकता के अनुसार बढ़ाई या घटाई जा सकती है।

*Number of posts may increase / decrease as per requirement of the Authority.

2. पात्रता मानदंड और अन्य शर्तें भा.रा.रा.प्रा. की वेबसाइट **www.nhai.gov.in** पर देखे जा सकते हैं।
Eligibility criteria and other conditions may be seen on NHAI's website **www.nhai.gov.in.**

3. **आवेदन जमा करना:** इच्छुक और पात्र उम्मीदवार अपने आवेदन **04.05.2026 (सायं 06:00 बजे तक)** भा.रा.रा.प्रा. की वेबसाइट पर उपलब्ध लिंक के माध्यम से केवल ऑनलाइन जमा करें।
**Submission of Applications:** Applications are to be submitted online only. Eligible candidates may apply online on the link provided on the website of NHAI by **04.05.2026 (upto 06:00 PM).**

4. इस विज्ञापन के संबंध में शुद्धिपत्र/अनुशेष/निरस्तीकरण, यदि कोई होगा तो, उसे केवल भा.रा.रा.प्रा. की वेबसाइट पर प्रकाशित किया जाएगा।
Corrigendum/Addendum/Cancelation to this advertisement, if any, shall be published on NHAI website only.

***BUILDING A NATION, NOT JUST ROADS***



Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav
G20
**SWAMI VIVEKANAND NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF REHABILITATION TRAINING AND RESEARCH**
DEPARTMENT OF EMPOWERMENT OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES (DIVYANGJAN)
(MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE & EMPOWERMENT, GOVT. OF INDIA)
OLATPUR, P.O.-BAIROI, DIST-CUTTACK-754010, ODISHA

**RECRUITMENT NOTICE**

Applications are invited from the eligible candidates for the following posts:

**Ref. No.: AD 6B 10/01/2026 Dated:30.03.2026 (Regular Posts for SVNIRTAR, Cuttack)**

| Sl. No. | Name of the Post | Pay Matrix Level | Category | No. of posts |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | General Duty Medical Officer (GDMO) | Level-10 (Group - A) | UR | 01 |
| 2 | Lecturer Prosthetics & Orthotics | Level-10 (Group - A) | EWS | 01 (Through Deputation / Direct Recruitment) |
| 3 | Demonstrator (Physiotherapy) | Level-06 (Group - B) | UR | 01 |
| 4 | Typist/Clerk (Hindi/English) | Level-02 (Group - C) | UR (PwD - Hard of Hearing) | 01 |

**Ref. No.: AD6B19/02/2026 Date: 30.03.2026 (Consultant Posts for CRCSRE-Ranchi & Balangir)**

| Sl. No. | Name of the post | Consolidated monthly remuneration (per month) | No. of posts & Name of the Centre |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Lecturer (Occupational Therapy) (Consultant) | Rs.60,000/- | 01- CRCSRE - Ranchi |
| 2 | Administrative Officer (Consultant) | Rs.50,000/- | 01- CRCSRE - Ranchi |
| 3 | Clinical Assistant (Speech Therapist) (Consultant) | Rs.50,000/- | 01- CRCSRE - Ranchi<br>01- CRCSRE - Balangir |
| 4 | Assistant (Consultant) | Rs.45,000/- | 01- CRCSRE - Ranchi |

**Ref. No.: AD6B37/03/2026 Date: 30.03.2026**
**(Consultant Posts for CDEICs of SVNIRTAR- Cuttack, CRCSRE - Ranchi & Balangir)**

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 01 | Physiotherapist (Consultant) | Rs.35,000/- | 01- CDEIC - CRCSRE - Ranchi |
| 02 | Audiologist and Speech Language Pathologist (ASLP) (Consultant) | Rs.35,000/- | 01- CDEIC-SVNIRTAR - Cuttack<br>01- CDEIC- CRCSRE - Ranchi<br>01- CDEIC- CRCSRE - Balangir |

The aspiring applicants fulfilling the eligibility criteria in all respect can submit their application through on line mode. The online registration of application will be made available on SVNIRTAR, Cuttack official Website i.e. **https://svnirtar.nic.in** or can directly visit the website **i.e.https://recruitment.svnirtar.in.** The link of submission of online application in respect of above said posts along with other relevant information will be activated on **01st April 2026 after 5:00 PM onwards.** For all other details, terms and conditions, please visit to website **https://svnirtar.nic.in.**

**Sd/- Director**



Government of India
**NATIONAL HIGHWAYS AUTHORITY OF INDIA**
(Ministry of Road Transport & Highways, Government of India)
Project Implementation Unit – Bengaluru
Survey No. 13, 14th Km, Nagasandra,
Bengaluru-Tumkur Road (NH-4), Bengaluru - 560073

**PUBLIC NOTICE**

1. In provisions of National Highways Fee (Determination of Rates and Collection) Rules, 2008 and Amended Rules, 2011 and as per the official Notification S.O. 4823 (E) published in the Gazette of India, on 02.11.2023, the rates for collection of user fee at plaza of Four Laning from km 42.00 to km 80.00 of Dodaballapura Bypass to Hoskote section of NH-648 (Old NH-207) in the State of Karnataka (Package-II) are revised as under and effective from 00.00 Hrs of 01.04.2026

Amount in Rs

| AT NALLURU DEVANAHALLI TOLL PLAZA | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Category | Fee for single Journey | Fee for return journey within a day | Fee for monthly pass for 50 single journeys in a month | Fee for Commercial Vehicles registered within the district of plaza |
| Car/Jeep/Van/LMV | 85 | 125 | 2805 | 40 |
| LCV/LGV/Mini Bus | 135 | 205 | 4525 | 70 |
| Truck/Bus (2 Axle) | 285 | 425 | 9485 | 140 |
| 3 Axle Commercial Vehicle | 310 | 465 | 10350 | 155 |
| Heavy Construction Machinery/Earth Moving Equipment or Multi Axle Vehicle (MAV) (4-6 Axles) | 445 | 670 | 14875 | 225 |
| Oversized vehicles (7 or more axle) | 545 | 815 | 18110 | 270 |

**Note:**
1. The rate for monthly pass for local personal traffic is Rs.350/- (Three Hundred fifty Rupees) for the year 2026-2027 for Car/Jeep/Van/LMV.
2. The rate of Annual Pass for the FY 2026-27 is Rs.3075/-.
3. The fee rates mentioned above in the table and the amount of monthly pass for the local personal traffic are subject to annual revision from 1st April every year on the basis of the provisions of the National Highways Fee (Determination of Rates and Collection) Rules, 2008 & its amendments.

(K.B Jayakumara)
Project Director, PIU-Bengaluru.



अखिल भारतीय आयुर्विज्ञान संस्थान, गोरखपुर
All India Institute of Medical Sciences, Gorakhpur
( स्वास्थ्य एवं परिवार कल्याण मंत्रालय भारत सरकार द्वारा स्थापित एक स्वायत्त निकाय )
(An autonomous organization under the Ministry of Health & Family Welfare, Govt. of India)

Ref: AIIMS/GKP/RECT/2025-26/609 Date:30.03.2026

**CORRIGENDUM**

With reference to the recruitment notification "Advertisement of Walk-in Interview for the post of Senior Residents in various departments of AIIMS Gorakhpur, under the Government of India Residency Scheme," The SR weekly interviews, held **every Wednesday,** will continue **till 30th of April 2026**. Details of vacant seats will be updated on the official website of AIIMS Gorakhpur. (https://www.aiimsgorakhpur.edu.in/)

**SD/-**
**Executive Director**
**AIIMS, Gorakhpur**



Government of India
**NATIONAL HIGHWAYS AUTHORITY OF INDIA**
(Ministry of Road Transport & Highways, Government of India)
Project Implementation Unit – Bengaluru
Survey No. 13, 14th Km, Nagasandra,
Bengaluru-Tumkur Road (NH-4), Bengaluru - 560073

**PUBLIC NOTICE**

1. In provisions of National Highways Fee (Determination of Rates and Collection) Rules, 2008 and Amended Rules, 2011 and as per the official Notification S.O. 356 (E) published in the Gazette of India, on 19.01.2024, the rates for collection of user fee at plaza of Four-Laning from km 00.00 to km 42.00 of Dobaspete to Dodaballapur Bypass of NH-648 (Old NH-207) in the state of Karnataka (Package-I) are revised as under and effective from 00.00 Hrs of 01.04.2026.

Amount in Rs

| AT HULIKUNTE TOLL PLAZA | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Category | Fee for single Journey | Fee for return journey within a day | Fee for monthly pass for 50 single journeys in a month | Fee for Commercial Vehicles registered within the district of plaza |
| Car/Jeep/Van/LMV | 110 | 160 | 3595 | 55 |
| LCV/LGV/Mini Bus | 175 | 260 | 5805 | 85 |
| Truck/Bus (2 Axle) | 365 | 550 | 12165 | 185 |
| 3 Axle Commercial Vehicle | 400 | 595 | 13275 | 200 |
| Heavy Construction Machinery/Earth Moving Equipment or Multi Axle Vehicle (MAV) (4-6 Axles) | 570 | 860 | 19080 | 285 |
| Oversized vehicles (7 or more axle) | 695 | 1045 | 23230 | 350 |

**Note:**
1. The rate for monthly pass for local personal traffic is Rs.350/- (Three Hundred fifty Rupees) for the year 2026-2027 for Car/Jeep/Van/LMV.
2. The rate of Annual Pass for the FY 2026-27 is Rs.3075/-.
3. The fee rates mentioned above in the table and the amount of monthly pass for the local personal traffic are subject to annual revision from 1st April every year on the basis of the provisions of the National Highways Fee (Determination of Rates and Collection) Rules, 2008 & its amendments.

(K.B Jayakumara)
Project Director, PIU-Bengaluru.



Government of India
**NATIONAL HIGHWAYS AUTHORITY OF INDIA**
(Ministry of Road Transport & Highways, Government of India)
Project Implementation Unit – Bengaluru
Survey No. 13, 14th Km, Nagasandra,
Bengaluru-Tumkur Road (NH-4), Bengaluru -560073

**PUBLIC NOTICE**

1. In provisions of National Highways Fee (Determination of Rates and Collection) Rules, 2008 and Amended Rules, 2011 and as per the official Notification S.O. 376 (E) published in the Gazette of India, on 05.03.2012, the rates for collection of user fee at plaza of Design, Construction, Development, Finance, Operation and Maintenance of Km.463.600 (AP/Karnataka Border) to Km.524.000 (Avathi village) and (ii) Improvement, Operation and Maintenance of Km.524.000 to Km.527.000 (Nandihill crossing) and Km.535 (Devanahalli village) to Km.539 (Meenukunte village) on NH-7 in the State of Karnataka (KNT-01) are revised as under and effective from 00.00 Hrs of 01.04.2026.

Amount in Rs

| AT BAGEPALLI TOLL PLAZA | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Category | Fee for single Journey | Fee for return journey within a day | Fee for monthly pass for 50 single journeys in a month | Fee for Commercial Vehicles registered within the district of plaza |
| Car/Jeep/Van/LMV | 120 | 180 | 4025 | 60 |
| LCV/LGV/Mini Bus | 195 | 290 | 6500 | 95 |
| Truck/Bus (2 Axle) | 410 | 615 | 13615 | 205 |
| 3 Axle Commercial Vehicle | 445 | 670 | 14855 | 225 |
| Heavy Construction Machinery/Earth Moving Equipment or Multi Axle Vehicle (MAV) (4-6 Axles) | 640 | 960 | 21355 | 320 |
| Oversized vehicles (7 or more axle) | 780 | 1170 | 25995 | 390 |

**Note:**
1. The rate for monthly pass for local personal traffic is Rs.350/- (Three Hundred fifty Rupees) for the year 2026-2027 for Car/Jeep/Van/LMV.
2. The rate of Annual Pass for the FY 2026-27 is Rs.3075/-.
3. The fee rates mentioned above in the table and the amount of monthly pass for the local personal traffic are subject to annual revision from 1st April every year on the basis of the provisions of the National Highways Fee (Determination of Rates and Collection) Rules, 2008 & its amendments.

(K.B Jayakumara)
Project Director, PIU-Bengaluru.



**Registrations Closing Today**

**ET Young Mind Entrepreneurship Program**

Starting 4th April • Classes 6 & Above • Live Online • Weekend Sessions

5-Week Learning Plan

01 Problem & Idea Discovery
02 Idea Validation & Selection
03 Business Model Strategy
04 Brand & Go-to-Market
05 Financials & Investor Pitch

Certificate from The Economic Times
Startup Visit for Top Students
Compete for ₹5 Lakh Prize Pool
Pitch Idea at ET Soonicorn Summit
Project Showcase on ET Website

SCAN TO REGISTER

ET THE ECONOMIC TIMES

Start your entrepreneurial journey by building a prototype, pitching your idea, and developing a leadership mindset.

LIMITED-SEAT BATCH

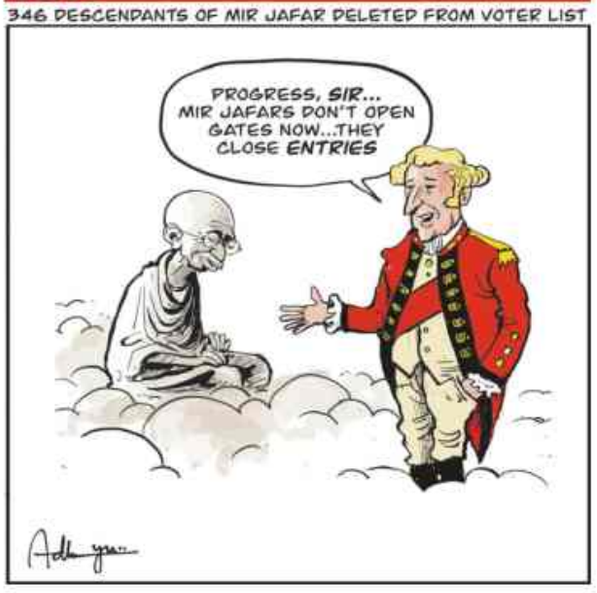
WhatsApp:
+91 93551 01276
Website:
http://toi.in/proto-pitch

A TIMES INTERNET PRODUCT

# Tribunals free to evolve own procedures: SC

TOI LINE OF NO CONTROL — SANDEEP ADHWARYU

346 DESCENDANTS OF MIR JAFAR DELETED FROM VOTER LIST




▶Continued from page 1

The tribunals are free to evolve their own procedures in accordance with principles of natural justice, and are requested to adjudicate the appeals after providing the parties with a fair opportunity of being heard," it said, adding those intending to file appeals before the tribunals would be provided with reasons given by judicial officers in rejecting their claims.

Senior advocate Kalyan Banerjee objected to EC giving a day's training to former CJs and judges prior to commencement of work in the tribunals from Thursday. "Tribunals are quasi-judicial bodies. They must act independently. Why the training," he asked. CJI said, "They are former CJs and judges of HCs. Obviously, they will act independently. Training is for handling computer and soft copies of documents. Don't raise frivolous objections." EC counsel and senior advocate D S Naidu said it is not training, but only orientation.

Justice Bagchi said, "They have vast experience in deciding matters. You must not be worried about EC influencing judges." advocate Kapil Sibal said, "We must have the liberty to approach the HC CJ when we have some grievance." The bench said, "Obviously, you have the right to approach the Calcutta HC CJ. But don't go in a group or in a delegation. If you send a political delegation, we will tell the CJ not to entertain such delegations. Mr. Banerjee, or the advocate general, can go and meet. Where is the necessity of political workers to go and meet the CJ?"

Justice Bagchi said, "The problem is to the best of our knowledge and information, representations by political unions or associations are not only made to the HC CJ but also to district judges. We do not want judicial officers to be disturbed in this manner.

# SC judge names 400 amici curiae in 3 years

## Junior-Most Lawyer Present Made Amicus

Dhananjay.Mahapatra
@timesofindia.com

TOI

The court tasked the amici curiae to get in touch with the respondent, whose address and phone numbers are usually mentioned in the petition

**New Delhi:** Creating a record of sorts, a Supreme Court judge has devised an innovative method – appointment of amicus curiae — to expedite hearing in cases where respondents do not appear despite issuance of notice on petitions.

In the last three years, Justice Sanjay Karol-led benches have appointed nearly 400 amici curiae and tasked them to get in touch with the respondent, whose address and phone numbers are usually mentioned in the petition.

Instead of the easier option of letting matters get adjourned repeatedly, Justice Karol employed the method to inquire from the respondent whether they were interested in contesting the petitioner's claim, whether they were economically sound enough to engage a lawyer of their choice and whether they would avail services of a lawyer provided by SC Legal Services Committee (SCLSC) free of cost to contest the case.

Whenever a respondent did not mark their presence in court either personally or through a lawyer pursuant to court's notice, the Justice Karol-led bench would seek out the junior-most lawyer present in the courtroom and appoint them the amicus.

"The 400 such amicus curiae appointed by the Justice Karol-led bench have not only expedited hearing in cases but also assured poor litigants of free legal aid by SCLSC. The measure has provided young lawyers an opportunity to argue before the highest court of the country, helping them shed inhibitions," a senior official in SC Registry told **TOI**.

The standard format for such orders appointing amicus curiae says: "Amicus curiae shall endeavour to get in touch with the respondent directly in writing, apprising him about the pendency of the present petition; the passing of this order; his right of engaging a counsel of his choice; and his right of being represented through a legal aid counsel, subject to eligibility.

## Verdicts reserved by SC, only to be delivered after 17 and 11 months

Dhananjay.Mahapatra
@timesofindia.com

**New Delhi:** Supreme Court's recent judicial attempts to sensitise HC judges against not reserving verdicts in order to avoid delaying justice delivery and causing anxiety to litigants appears to have had little impact on some of its own judges.

Take for instance two judgments delivered by Justice Manoj Misra on Wednesday. One pertained to a criminal case lodged in 2001, in which the trial court had given its verdict in 2007 and HC in 2012. The appellant, Samarendra Kundu, had filed an appeal in SC in 2012.

A division bench had reserved its verdict after hearing counsel for Kundu and respondent Sadhana Das on Oct 25, 2024, more than 17 months ago. The judgment finally delivered by Justice Misra on Wednesday ended the criminal case. The second judgment delivered by Justice Misra pertained to an appeal against an Apr 2019 judgment of Allahabad HC. In this case, the bench had reserved its verdict on May 6 last year, nearly 11 months ago. Sources said the presiding judges had reminded Justice Misra about the pendency.

# SC fines Centre as unnecessary appeals by govt cause backlog

AmitAnand.Choudhary
@timesofindia.com

**New Delhi:** Highlighting that the govt are the biggest litigators and contribute to pendency of cases by filing unnecessary appeals, SC on Wednesday imposed a fine of Rs 25,000 on Centre for challenging well reasoned order of Punjab and Haryana HC which had quashed its decision to terminate the job of a CISF official for being on unauthorised leave for 11 days and helping a young couple to elope and get married.

The official was removed from his job in 2010 on grounds of misconduct for being absent from duty and for conniving with a daughter of CISF constable to facilitate her to elope and get married with his friend at Arya Samaj Mandir. He had approached the HC which directed his reinstatement with 25% back wages after which Centre filed an appeal in the court. At the outset of hearing, it questioned the govt for filing appeal and said that Centre's decision to terminate the job was disproportionate.

# Nishikant Dubey apologises for his CIA swipe at Biju

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

**New Delhi:** BJP MP **Nishikant Dubey** on Wednesday tendered an apology for his post that had dubbed former Odisha CM Biju Patnaik a link between Jawaharlal Nehru and CIA, which had triggered a political row and drawn angry reactions from even his own party colleagues, as he sought to put a lid on the controversy.

"Biju babu has always been a tall statesman for me and will remain so. If my statement has hurt anyone's sentiments, I seek an unconditional apology," MP Dubey said.

His apology came on a day Prime Minister Narendra Modi had a word of praise for the former Odisha CM who was a leading anti-Congress voice in his time. In a letter to incumbent chief minister Mohan Charan Majhi to mark the recognition of Odisha as a separate province in 1936, he said, "This is the soil that nurtured the great Biju Patnaik, whose life epitomises strength, courage and an unwavering commitment to nation-building. Biju Babu's multifaceted persona inspires us all."

Dubey, a BJP MP from Jharkhand, known for his unabashed attacks on BJP's critics, especially the Nehru-Gandhi family, said it was his personal opinion. He claimed that his view on Biju Patnaik was in the context of misdeeds of the Nehru-Gandhi family and was misinterpreted.

On X last week, Dubey had called the former Odisha CM a "link" between Jawaharlal Nehru, and the US and its spy agency CIA which, he alleged, used to fund Congress.

# FCRA Bill: Oppn protests disrupt Parl proceedings

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Opposition stages a protest against the FCRA Bill at the Parliament, Wednesday

**New Delhi:** Opposition protests against the bill to amend the foreign contribution regulation law rocked Parliament on Wednesday, forcing adjournment of proceedings in Lok Sabha amid allegations that the ruling BJP was trying to control independent NGOs.

Opposition MPs also held a large demonstration in the Parliament complex against the controversial legislation. As LS was convened, opposition members started raising slogans against the FCRA (Amendment) Bill. Parliamentary affairs minister Kiren Rijiju said the bill seeks to protect national security and was not aimed at any religion or organisation. As the protest was led primarily by members from Kerala and Tamil Nadu, Rijiju said Congress and Left parties were misleading the people of poll-bound Kerala. He also clarified that the bill was not being taken up for discussion on Wednesday.

With BJP wooing Christians, especially in poll-bound Kerala where they comprise over 18% of population, govt's decision to go slow on the bill in the face of protests from Christian groups might have been driven by political pragmatism.

While BJP believes that amending the law through the bill is necessary to curb its alleged misuse against "national interest", the party has been receptive to demands of Christians groups in the past, as witnessed in the quick release of two Kerala nuns arrested under anti-conversion law in Chhattisgarh last year, after fierce protests from the community.

The demonstration was held ahead of start of Parliament's proceedings. Holding a huge banner which asked govt to "stop targeting NGOs and Institutions', the MPs raised slogans and demanded that the bill be withdrawn. Among the protesting MPs were Manickam Tagore, Ramgopal Yadav, NK Premachandran, Kodikunnil Suresh, Dimple Yadav, Amar Singh, Manish Tewari and Supriya Sule. As most MPs were away for election campaigning, AICC general secretary KC Venugopal said on Monday night that Congress members had been asked to be present in the house and oppose the FCRA bill, while other parties were invited to join the protest.

# Agra court awards death to man, 2 sons for killing bahu, 'lover' in '22

Sudeep.Lavania
@timesofindia.com

**Agra:** A court here on Wednesday awarded death penalty to a man and his two sons for the murder of their daughter-in-law and her companion in 2022 in Etmad-ud-Daula area of the city. The court held the crime to be among "rarest of rare" cases, warranting maximum punishment.

Additional district judge Amarjeet convicted Madan Singh Sisodia (55) and his sons Gaurav (36) and Abhishek (34), ordering that they be "hanged by the neck until death." The Agra court also imposed a fine of Rs1 lakh on each convict and granted them 30 days to file an appeal. Madan Singh's wife, Neelam, was acquitted due to lack of evidence.

ADGC Mohit Pal said the crime happened on May 27, 2022, afternoon, when Gaurav, assisted by his father and brother, attacked his wife, Pooja, and her friend Shivan with sticks and sharp-edged weapons. Gaurav continued to hit the victims with sticks even after they died, said Pal, adding all the accused were arrested within hours of the incident.

An FIR was registered under IPC sections 498A (domestic violence), 302 (murder), 120B (criminal conspiracy) and sections of Dowry Prohibition Act at Etmadaullah police station. Police filed the chargesheet in Aug 2022. In their defence, the accused claimed the victims killed each other following a dispute, a contention rejected by the prosecution.


आईआरईएल (इंडिया) लिमिटेड / IREL (India) Limited
(भारत सरकार का उपक्रम)
(A Government of India Undertaking)
CIN : U15100MH1950GOI008187 Website : www.irel.co.in
ISO 9001: 2015, ISO 14001: 2015

Ref: ADVT.NO.IREL/EOI/ILM/2026-27/01

EXPRESSION OF INTEREST

IREL (India) Limited invites Expression of Interest (EoI) (EoI No. EOI-IREL-OR-ILM/FY 2026-27) for the supply of OR and Q grade ilmenite for both domestic and export sales through an Annual Quantity Agreement (AQA) for the period of April 2026 to March 2027. Interested buyers may download EoI document from http://irel.co.in (news section). Any corrigendum to the same shall be hosted on above websites only.

Senior Manager (Marketing)

cbc48129/12/0001/2627



TIMES interact — Connecting People, Connecting Needs
To book your ad | Logon to: ads.timesofindia.com or Call: 18001205474 (Toll Free) | Scan QR Code

real estate

PLOTS FOR SALE

AMARAVATI, Andhra Pradesh CRDA gated Vertex Capital plot East 212 yards sale in 28000/-yard 8978382072 Watsup owner

BANGALORE PROPERTIES

BANASHANKARI

BANASHANKARI 6th stage, 5th block, FOR SALE, BDA 30*40 site , West Facing, Near Thambuli Mane. Price 12,500/- SQFT. NEG. Owner: 9945755166

SAHAKARA NAGAR

NEW FULL-APARTMT BLDG For Sale 7.50 Crs., 13,000 sqft - 9 Apt's (2 & 4 BHK's). Built-up on 2400 sft site, Ideal for Rentl. Incom, Service Apartments Corporate Guest House. 1.5 km from. Hebbal Flyover. Near SAHAKAR NAGAR. OWNER- 98800-53505.

PROPERTY ANCILLARIES

INDUSTRIAL PREMISES

Verna Developers
Barton Centre, MG Road
9620253180
Our Services Tumkur and Bangalore District Urban / Rural
KIADB ALLOTTED
Industrial land Buy / Sell, and pending work follow up of Allotment letter , PC , lease / Sale Agreement, Survey, Plan Sanction etc.

auto

PRE-OWNED VEHICLES

HYUNDAI

FOR SALE:- Hyundai i10 (2019 Model) Colour: Blue, Mileage 12,345 Kms. Call: +91 97400 36925

business

BUSINESS PROPOSALS

NES Public School premises at HSR Layout Sector 6 available during summer holidays with playground and classrooms for sports and coaching classes. Contact: 9980069578

INVESTMENT

INVESTOR wanted for Construction of Residential Building in 30*40 & 60*40 land in Bangalore 30*40/ 60*40 Land Required for Joint Venture In Bangalore Call for Details +91 75340 90909

personal

CHANGE OF NAME

I, B. R. BHARATHI, DOB: 11.07.1954, W/o Late Shri K. R. Venkatesha Rao, Kaggundi, Humchadakatte, Shivamogga, 577436, affirm that both names K. V. BHARATHI and B. R. BHARATHI refer to the same person. Henceforth I shall be known as B. R. BHARATHI. Affidavit dated 26-03-2026 sworn before Notary K.C. Tulasidas, Thirthahalli.

I, GEETA W/o SHARANAYYA HIREMATH D/o RAJASHEKER, R/o JS Carnation, No. G09, B Block, Ground Floor, NRI Layout, Kalkere Main Road, Kalkere, Horamavu, Bengaluru, Karnataka-560043, have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as GEETA HIREMATH.

I, Harish Ashok Hadapad, S/o Ashok Hadapad, Age 38 Years, Address: Vidya nagar, Rabkavi (Rural), Rabkavi 587314, have changed my name from Harish Ashok Hadapad to Harish Ashok Koru, vide Affidavit Number IN-KA14431520442604Y, dated 23/03/2026, before Notary B. M. Chandrashekar

I, GUNJAN VIRMANI D/o. Shri Vijay Kumar Virmani, R/o. A-1/287, Sector-6, Rohini, Delhi-110085 have changed my name to GUNJAN for all purposes vide Affidavit Dated: 01/04/2026, sworn before Notary Sanjeev Jain, Delhi.

LOST & FOUND

LOST: I, Lakshmana Raya, S/o Sri. Late Venkatarama naiah, have lost original rectification sale deed of the property bearing No.74, 3rd Cross, Radhakrishna, HBCS 2nd stage, Padmanabhanagar, Bangalore-560070, Document No.KEN-1-05804-2004-05, dt: 12.05.2004 & registered at Kengeri sub registrar office, Bangalore, lost while travelling to Banashankari on 05.03.2026, regarding this I have given a police complaint (2131388/2026) dt: 30.03.2026, Finder please contact: 98863 99778 or Handover to the nearest police station.

I, Shubham Bajpai, University Reg. No. 90316039, R/o N-401, Mantri Serenity, Doddakallasandra, Bangalore-560062, have lost my original B.Tech degree in Naval Architecture and Shipbuilding from the Department of Ship Technology of Cochin University of Science and Technology, passed out in Aug 2020. If found, contact: 7075794299.

BOOK YOUR TENDER/NOTICE ADS
FOR BOOKING PLEASE CONTACT
Bharat
7760833522
TO BOOK ONLINE LOG ON TO
Adstimesofindia.com
SCAN TO BOOK
EXCLUSIVE OFFERS AND ASSISTANCE

BOOK YOUR SERVICE ADS
TO BOOK ONLINE LOG ON TO Adstimesofindia.com | SCAN QR CODE

Readers are recommended to make appropriate enquires and seek appropriate advice before sending money, incurring any expenses, acting on medical recommendations or entering into any commitment in relation to any advertisement published in this publication. All creatives marked as Advertorial, Spotlight and Promotional Features are to be treated as Advertisements. The Times of India Group doesn't vouch for any claims made by the Advertisers of the products and services. The Printer, Publisher, Editor, and the owners of The Times of India Group publications shall not be held liable for any consequences, in the event such claims are not honoured by the Advertisers.



JAIPUR VIDYUT VITRAN NIGAM LIMITED
OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER (O&S)
OLD POWER HOUSE PREMISES, BANI PARK, JAIPUR - 302006, TELEFAX : 0141-2200582
e-PROCUREMENT SHORT TERM TENDER NOTICE
E-tender is invited for "Providing Trolley Mounted Lifters along with Manpower on Hiring Basis (TN- 53, UBN- VVN2526SLOB01061). All the details regarding tenders are available at web site www.energy.rajasthan.gov.in/jvvnl and www.eproc.rajasthan.gov.in. In future, corrigendum/extension, if any, shall be published only at above web sites.
Raj.Samwad/C/26/75 JPR-3138 (2026) SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER (I & S)
For Electricity Complaints Toll Free No. 1800 180 6507

JAWAHARLAL NEHRU PORT AUTHORITY
(PORT PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT)
ISO 9001:2015, ISO 27001:2013, ISO 14001:2015, OHSAS 18001:2007 CERTIFIED
TENDER NOTICE
Tender No: JNPA/Tender/Landscaping/T-09/2026, Dated 31 March 2026
JNPA invites e-tender for "Execution of Integrated Landscape Beautification and Horticulture Works at JNPA (Outside Custom Bound Area)". The estimated cost of the said work is Rs.30,90,82,279/-(excluding GST). The details of the tender are available in the notice placed on JNPA website https://www.jnport.gov.in/ or https://eprocure.gov.in, from 02/04/2026.
Sd/-
CHIEF GENERAL MANAGER
Port Planning & Development Department

MUNICIPAL CORPORATION CHANDIGARH
Booking & Advertisement Branch
E-AUCTION NOTICE
The Municipal Corporation, Chandigarh is going to book Commercial Grounds of Exhibition Ground, Sector 34, Circus Ground, Sector 17 and CHB Ground, Manimarja, Chandigarh for the period for 10 months or up to 31st December, 2026 which ever is earlier through e-auction as per the following schedule :

| Date of Publication | Submission Start Date | Submission End Date | Approval Start Date | Approval End Date | Auction Start Date | Auction End Date |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 02.04.26 | 03.04.26 | 05.04.26 | 06.04.26 | 07.04.26 | 08.04.26 | 09.04.26 |
| 09.00 AM | 10.00 AM | 4.00 PM | 10.00 AM | 6.00 PM | 11.00 AM | 06.00 PM |

The detailed terms and conditions of E-Auction can be downloaded from the website: http://eauction.gov.in and mcchandigarh.gov.in
Commissioner
Municipal Corporation Chandigarh

KARNATAKA INDUSTRIAL AREAS DEVELOPMENT BOARD
(A Government of Karnataka Undertaking)
No.2, 2/1 and 2/3, Kalidasa Marg, 1st Main Road, Gandhinagar
Bengaluru - 560 009. Phone No. 080-22265383, website: www.kiadb.in
No. IADB/ENGG/ETND-EP-02/14/2026-27 Date: 01.04.2026
SHORT TERM NOTICE INVITING TENDER
(Through GOK Karnataka Public Procurement Portal Only)
Item rate Tenders are invited as per the Karnataka Transparency in Public Procurement Act 1999 and Rules 2000 through electronic procurement from eligible Contractors registered in KCEI who have got adequate financial resources & sufficient past experience for the following works as per the schedule given below:
Name of the Works : 1) Re-conditioning, Operation and Annual Maintenance of Streetlights at Kumbalagudu 1st & 2nd Phase, Attibele & Veerasandra Industrial Area, Bengaluru. (2nd Call). (Reserved for SC). 2) Shifting of existing 66kV Kora to Thovinakere SC line passing over the premises of Japanese Industrial Park at Vasanthanarasapura Industrial Area, Tumakuru Taluk & District. (2nd Call).
The last date and time of receipt of tender is : 15.04.2026 upto 4.00 pm.
Applicants May Download Bidding Documents from the Karnataka Public Procurement Portal https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in.
Sd/-
Chief Engineer-1, KIADB Bengaluru
DIPR/CP/17/NR/2026-27


# GRP constable chasing theft suspect hit by train, loses legs

Pathikrit.Chakarborty@timesofindia.com

**Lucknow:** A GRP constable lost both legs after being run over by a train while chasing a theft suspect allegedly attempting to escape custody at Uttar Pradesh's Gonda railway station late Tuesday. Constable Akash Singh, 29, a 2018-batch cop, slipped into the gap between the train and the platform as he tried to grab the fleeing suspect, who had boarded the running train.

Singh was on duty when a dispute broke out between two men, with one accusing the other of theft. Singh brought both to GRP post for questioning. After preliminary inquiry, the suspect was detained. Around midnight, when Dibrugarh-Chandigarh Express reached the platform, the suspect suddenly tried to flee by boarding the moving train.

The constable caught hold of the accused and pulled him down. However, during the scuffle, he slipped into the gap. Both his legs got severed — one completely amputated and the other critically damaged. Despite the injuries, he ensured the suspect was caught. Singh's colleagues took him to Gonda Medical College, from where he was referred to trauma centre of King George's Medical University. Doctors said his condition was stable but his legs had to be amputated.

# Sikkim govt to close 17 schools this year as enrolment drops

**Gangtok:** The Sikkim govt is planning to temporarily close 17 more primary schools this year due to declining enrolment, education department secretary Tashi Chophel Lepcha said on Wednesday, attributing the trend to the state's low fertility rate.

Lepcha said low enrolment continues to pose a major challenge for the state's school education system. He said 38 primary schools were temporarily shut last year, and a proposal has been made to close 17 more this year. "At a Total Fertility Rate (TFR) of 1.0, Sikkim has the lowest fertility rate in the country. This has led to a decline in population growth as well as student enrolment," he said. He also said the department plans to propose a Transfer Policy Act for teachers, describing frequent and irregular transfers as a major administrative challenge. If approved, the Act is expected to bring greater stability, transparency and predictability in teacher postings, he added. Lepcha also said inclusive education for children with special needs requires more trained teachers. "While the govt has created infrastructure for special education, there is a shortage of specialised educators, forcing existing staff to move between clusters of schools, which limits the attention each child receives," he said. PTI

## School in Meghalaya closed for not adding Khasi language as subject

**Shillong:** A school in Meghalaya's East Khasi Hills was shut by village authorities and members of a students' union for not introducing Khasi language as a subject, officials said on Wednesday. Madan Hindi Patshala Secondary School in Madanrting was asked to shut down after complaints that the absence of Khasi teaching was depriving local students of the opportunity to appear for the subject in their matriculation examinations. Local headman, village secretary and students warned of putting the school under lock and key permanently if the demand to introduce the Khasi language is not met. PTI

CARATLANE

A TATA PRODUCT

# Diamonds, *for the diamond you are*

FLAT

50% Off On making charges + 15% Off On diamond prices

On all Diamond Designs

## Natural Diamonds Starting at ₹5000

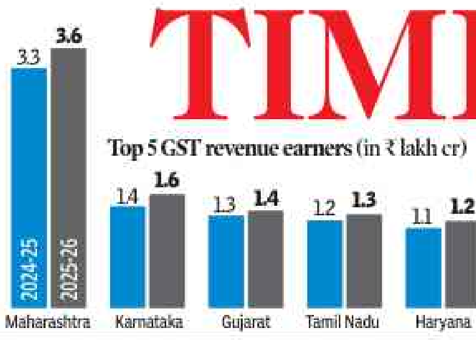
**Stores in Karnataka**

**North Bengaluru :** Hennur - Geddalahalli, New BEL Road - KGE Layout, Phoenix Mall of Asia - Bellary Road, RMZ Galleria Mall - Yelahanka | **South Bengaluru :** Banashankari - IV Phase, Electronic City - Neeladri Road, Forum South Bengaluru Mall konanakunte cross, Jayanagar - 4th Block, JP Nagar - 24th Main Road, Kanakapura Road - Raghuvanahalli, Royal Meenakshi Mall - Bannerghatta Road, RR Nagar - Jawaharlal Nehru Road, Vega City Mall - Dollar layout | **South-East Bengaluru :** Bommanahalli - Bandepalya, M5 Mall ECity, Nexus Koramangala, HSR Layout, Koramangala - 100 Feet Road | **East Bengaluru :** KR Puram - Old Madras Road, Sarjapur Road - Doddakannelli, Nexus Shantiniketan - Whitefield, Indiranagar - 100 Feet Road, Kammanahalli - HRBR Layout, Marathahalli - Outer Ring Road, Phoenix Market city - Mahadevapura, Whitefield | **West Bengaluru :** Margosa Road - Malleshwaram, Orion Mall - Malleshwaram | **Central Bengaluru :** M.G Road, Commercial Street Kamaraj Road | **Belgaum :** Tilakwadi - Goaves Circle | **Hubli:** Koppikar Road | **Mangaluru:** Bejai-Kapikad Road, Fiza by Nexus Mall - Pandeshwar | **Mysore :** Devaraja Urs Road, Nexus Centre City Mall - Hyderali Road | **Gulbarga** - Station Road

www.caratlane.com | 365+ stores across India | ✆044 42935000

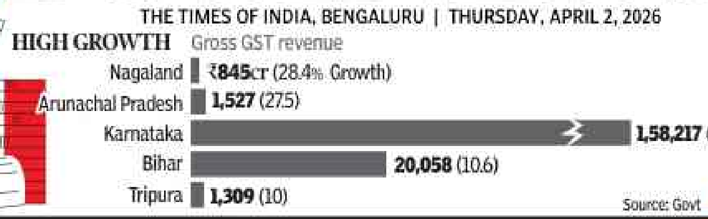
**Shaya Stores:** **Bengaluru** - Nexus Koramangala, Phoenix Marketcity Whitefield, HSR Layout, Forum South Bengaluru, Nexus Shantiniketan, Kamanahalli | **CaratLane Stores:** **Bengaluru** - Jayanagar, Indiranagar, Sarjapur, Margosa Road, KR Puram, Hennur, Marathalli, RR Nagar, JP Nagar, Commercial Street, Bommanahalli, Meenakshi Mall, Electronic City, New BEL Rd Kanakapura, Bejai, Phoenix Mall of Asia, M5 Mall Electronic City | **heyshaya.com**

In recent years, **GST collections have emerged as a key barometer of economic activity.** While lower rates did have a fiscal impact in the second half of last fiscal year, several states have more than made up for the hit through higher consumption



# TIMES BUSINESS

THE TIMES OF INDIA, BENGALURU | THURSDAY, APRIL 2, 2026



## West Asia conflict hits PE-VC funding in Q1 of CY2026

**Chennai:** The ongoing West Asia conflict has become a contributing factor in stemming the growth of private equity and venture capital (PE-VC) investments in India. PE-VC investments plunged 22% in the first quarter (Jan–March) of the current calendar year (CY2026) to $9.1 billion, compared with $11.7 billion during the corresponding quarter last year, data released by research firm Venture Intelligence on Wednesday showed. Investments also declined by 19% ($900 million) in March to $3.8 billion, compared with $4.7 billion in the same month of CY2025. The number of mega deals ($100 million and above) declined from 29 in Q1 CY2025 to 17 in the Jan–March period this year. PE-VC deals exclude those from the real estate sector. TNN

# RBI bans banks from offering clients offshore bets on rupee

### Curbs To Check Mounting Pressure On Re After 95/$ Slide

Times News Network

**REGAINING CONTROL OVER CURRENCY**

- In a first, banks barred from offering non-deliverable rupee derivatives to residents and non-residents
- Hedging deliverable FX derivatives allowed, but strictly against genuine exposure
- Speculation curbs: No rebooking cancelled contracts, exposure proof mandatory, related-party deals barred
- Crackdown follows rupee weakening 4% since start of the Iran war, sliding past 95/$ amid geopolitical stress
- Rules effective immediately, issued under FEMA, and valid till review
- Measures follow RBI's order to unwind FX net open positions above $100 mn in a bid to stop speculative dollar demand

**Mumbai:** In a bid to tighten its grip on currency markets, RBI has issued a fresh set of curbs on rupee-linked derivatives even as it moves to quell mounting pressure on the currency following recent geopolitical shocks.

RBI has for the first time barred banks from offering non-deliverable derivative contracts involving the rupee to both residents and non-residents. These instruments, which are settled in dollars without any physical exchange of the rupee, had become a popular vehicle for offshore-style bets on the currency. By contrast, the central bank has preserved access to deliverable derivatives, such as forwards and swaps tied to actual underlying exposures, provided they are used strictly for hedging genuine trade or financial risks.

RBI's circular also clamps down on practices that blur the line between hedging and speculation. Banks are no longer permitted to allow clients to rebook cancelled foreign-exchange derivative contracts, a tactic often used to maintain positions without formally rolling them over. Lenders have been instructed to demand documentary evidence of underlying exposure, reinforcing the requirement that derivative usage remain anchored in real economic activity. In addition, authorised dealers are barred from entering into such contracts with related parties, closing off avenues for intra-group transactions for multi-national lenders that could mask risk transfer or preferential dealing.

Issued under the Foreign Exchange Management Act, 1999, the directions take immediate effect and will remain in force pending review. In practice, this marks a decisive reversal from the stance adopted in 2023-24, when the RBI had expanded access to onshore non-deliverable derivatives for resident corporates under a regulated framework.

The measures come close on the heels of the RBI asking banks to unwind their net open positions in foreign-exchange markets exceeding $100 million, in a bid to curb speculative demand for dollars. Together, the steps signal a coordinated effort to drain leverage and reduce volatility in currency trading.

The measures come at a time when the rupee breached the 95-per-dollar level in March, weakening by 4% since the outbreak of the US–Israel–Iran conflict, as higher oil prices and risk aversion fuelled demand for the greenback. By shutting down non-deliverable routes and tightening onshore discipline, RBI is intent on reasserting control over price discovery in the rupee, even at the cost of reversing earlier liberalisation.

# GST mop-up crosses ₹2L cr mark in March

### Highest Collection Since Rate Restructuring In Sept | Imports-Based Kitty Expands 18%

Times News Network

**New Delhi:** Goods and services tax (GST) collections rose 8.8% in March to cross the Rs 2 lakh crore mark for the first time since rates were lowered in Sept.

Latest data showed that collections from domestic sources, based on transactions in Feb, went up nearly 6% to Rs 1,46,202 crore. The kitty based on imports expanded nearly 18% to Rs 53,861 crore, pointing to the impact of higher gold and silver imports, amid hardening of global oil prices towards the end of Feb when tension in West Asia was building up.

"There has been a significant increase in imports which has contributed to the GST collections on imports, this would also have led to a significant increase in the customs duty collections. Since these figures relate to the production/ consumption during Feb 2026, they do not reflect the impact of the ongoing crisis in West Asia," said M S Mani, partner at Deloitte India.

While there may be some impact of the conflict on next month's collections, some of that may be offset by the year-end sales rush as companies typically step up dispatches in March to meet their sales targets.

"Looking ahead to April, we anticipate a cautious trajectory. Geopolitical headwinds and global inflationary pressures are likely to compress consumption demand. While the traditional year-end sales may provide a tactical buffer, the mid-term outlook necessitates continued policy intervention to sustain manufacturing momentum against global volatility," Saurabh Agarwal, tax partner at EY India.

While overall refunds were 13.8% higher at Rs 22,000 crore in March, refunds on imports fell 10.6%. On a net basis, collections went up 8.2% during the month.

"Refunds, which expanded nearly 18% during the year, moderated net revenue growth but also signalled improved efficiency in the tax system, after GST 2.0 impetus on clearing 90% of the refunds within seven days from Nov 2025. Overall, GST collections not only reinforce fiscal stability but also validate the broader macroeconomic narrative: India's tax system is keeping pace with GDP expansion, providing govts and businesses alike with confidence in the sustainability of growth," said Vivek Jalan, partner at Tax Connect Advisory Services.

**CAUTION AHEAD: EXPERTS**

# One-time relief: SEZ units can sell 30% of turnover in domestic mkt

Times News Network

**SECTORS THAT MAKE THE CUT**

- Mineral products
- Chemical
- Plastics and rubber
- Leather goods & footwear
- Textiles
- Stone, ceramic and glass
- Base metals and its articles
- Machinery and electrical equipment
- Vehicles, aircraft and transport equipment

**Excluded:** Agriculture (including marine and processed food products & tobacco) marble and granite, gems and jewellery, vehicles, toys and petroleum

**New Delhi:** As a one-time relief for SEZ (Special Economic Zone) units, govt has allowed them to sell up to 30% of their turnover in the domestic tariff area, or the Indian market, by paying concessional duty.

A minimum 20% value addition within the SEZ has been prescribed for units to get the concession that is available during the current financial year. A list of sectors has also been notified, covering major sectors and keeping sensitive sectors out.

"The measure is expected to benefit around 1,200 SEZ manufacturing units by enabling economies of scale, reducing costs and enhancing resilience, while preserving export-oriented nature of SEZs," the commerce department said.

The department is also working on a broader framework on harmonisation of various export promotion schemes, with focus on enhancing exports from India.

Although the intent was announced in the budget, govt officials positioned it as a move to help exporters hit by global disruptions, including the West Asia conflict. Already, govt has offered a Rs 500 crore benefit to enhance insurance support for West Asia bound cargo, stepped up focus on duty refunds, while RBI offered relief to exporters on Monday.

"By allowing SEZ units to sell up to 30% of their export turnover in the domestic market, the one-time relief window introduces a calibrated and controlled flexibility, which will ease out the pressure faced by the existing units in SEZs due to global trade disruptions. This 30% cap is critical, it ensures that SEZs remain in primarily export-focused, while still providing a meaningful buffer against global demand shocks. This domestic sales enablement would act as a stabilisation mechanism for manufacturing operations," an official said.

Officials said the idea was to ensure maximum utilisation of production capacity. "Inclusion of minimum value addition requirements reinforces that relief measure is not about opening a trading route, but about strengthening genuine manufacturing activity. It ensures that units continue to focus on substantive production and value creation within India," the official said, pointing to sectoral safeguards as the benefit has not been given across-the-board.

# Oracle India's 10k staffers wake up to layoff shocker

**Shilpa Phadnis & Veena Mani** | TNN

**Bengaluru:** The dreaded 6 am emails from Oracle leadership, along with the sudden revocation of VPN and Slack access, have come to define the ongoing layoffs in India.

An estimated 10,000–12,000 employees in India — out of its 50,000-strong workforce — are likely to be affected, according to industry sources, while globally the company is said to be cutting around 30,000 roles. India, often described internally as a second headquarters for Oracle, is now bearing the brunt of the company's aggressive AI infrastructure push.

Experts said the scale of the layoffs comes as Oracle navigates mounting pressures from its expansion into AI data centre infrastructure. The developments have raised concerns as they highlight business challenges confronting large enterprises ramping up capital-intensive AI investments.

As part of its first quarter FY26 disclosures, Oracle said it has approved and initiated a restructuring plan aimed at improving operational efficiencies, with estimated costs of up to $1.6 billion. At the same time, the company is raising capital to expand capacity to meet contracted demand from its largest Oracle Cloud Infrastructure customers, including AMD, Meta, Nvidia, OpenAI, TikTok and xAI. The company expects to raise between $45 billion and $50 billion in gross cash proceeds during the current calendar year.

Significant cuts have been reported across Oracle Cloud Infrastructure (OCI), RHS (Revenue and Health Sciences), SVOS (SaaS and Virtual Operations Services), and the India development centre of NetSuite, sources said.

TOI spoke to several impacted employees who described the process as deeply impersonal, with notifications delivered via email and little to no direct communication from managers. The abrupt nature of the exercise, they said, left many feeling unsettled and unsupported during the transition.

"I tried to log in to the Oracle OCNA VPN, which is more domain-specific for my area of work. My Slack credentials didn't work either. We didn't see this coming so soon," one employee said.

Amid job cuts across levels, employees pointed to a stark irony — while some are being laid off, senior managers are still being asked to identify AI-specific talent, even as they are told to make do with existing resources, effectively signalling a hiring freeze.

For employees in the India development centre (IDC) based in Bengaluru, the severance package includes 15 days' salary (annual gross pay) for each year of service, encashment of accrued annual leave, and an ex gratia component comprising an additional 15 days' pay per year of service plus two months' salary. It also includes one month of garden leave (or salary in lieu) and Rs 20,000 towards insurance, sources told TOI.

An email sent to Oracle did not elicit a response till press time.

Oracle Financial Services employee Sushma Rai (name changed) expected April 1 to be a routine workday. Logging in for her 8 am call, she tried to access Slack — only to find her account had been disabled. Repeated calls to her manager initially went unanswered.

"Given my consistent performance and top ratings every year and quarter, I never imagined I would be laid off. The letter came as a shock. When my manager didn't respond to my calls, it felt strange. He eventually called back to say the letter would reach me within an hour," Rai told TOI.

Nita Singh (name changed), based at the Hyderabad centre, described a similar experience. Unaware she was on the layoff list, she said her manager offered no explanation for the decision, with communication limited to WhatsApp.

"I wasn't given any reason by either my manager or the HR SPOC. When I asked about internal redeployment, HR said I had one month — but that's effectively just the notice period. We don't even have access to internal portals to explore other roles," said Singh, who had spent four years at Oracle during her second stint with the company.

**CODE RED**

- **Global restructuring:** Around 30,000 roles expected to be cut worldwide
- **AI push intensifies:** Company expands investments in AI data centre infrastructure
- **High capital requirement:** Company cites up to **$1.6bn estimated restructuring cost**
- Oracle aims to **raise $45–50bn to support cloud capacity expansion**
- Severance offered to affected staff **includes 15 days' pay per year of service + ex gratia component**
- Package also includes **two months' salary, leave encashment, garden leave**
- Additional Rs **20,000 insurance support** offered
- Oracle India revenue grew **12% to Rs 20,459 crore in FY24** (Tofler data)

## Zetwerk files confidential papers for ₹5,000cr IPO

Times News Network

**Bengaluru:** B2B manufacturing startup Zetwerk has filed a confidential draft prospectus with the Securities and Exchange Board of India (Sebi) for its initial public offering, according to the company.

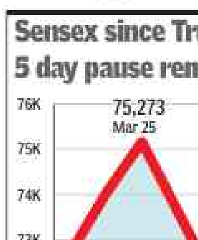
The company is reportedly targeting a Rs 5,000 crore offering. It is also in talks to raise around Rs 500 crore in a pre-IPO round from Bharat Value Fund and a group of high-net-worth individuals at a valuation of Rs 25,000–26,000 crore, according to reports. The filing comes amid subdued market conditions, with new-age IPOs facing pricing pressure as public market investors turn more cautious on valuations, particularly for loss-making firms.

For FY25, Zetwerk reported an 11% decline in operating revenue to Rs 12,798 crore, while its net loss narrowed to Rs 371 crore from Rs 918 crore in the previous fiscal. Founded in 2018 by Amrit Acharya, Srinath Ramakkrushnan, Rahul Sharma and Vishal Chaudhary, Zetwerk operates a managed marketplace connecting enterprise buyers with manufacturing suppliers across sectors such as industrial machinery, electronics, renewables and aerospace.

In July last year, founders Acharya and Ramakkrushnan infused Rs 600 crore into the company through personal debt, increasing their combined stake by about two percentage points.

# Sensex rallies 1,187 pts on West Asia peace hopes

Times News Network




**Mumbai:** Peace hopes in West Asia led to a global rally since late Tuesday that spilled over to the Indian market on Wednesday and boosted investor sentiment on Dalal Street. As a result, stocks rallied smartly with the sensex closing 1,187 points (1.7%) up at 73,134 points. The day's rally in the stock market was also boosted by some strengthening of the rupee against the dollar while crude prices in global markets showed a softening trend.

The day's four-digit points gain in sensex came despite foreign funds continuing to take money out of Indian stocks. At close of trading, net outflow by foreign portfolio investors (FPIs) from equities was Rs 8,331 crore, BSE data showed. In comparison, domestic funds were net buyers at Rs 7,172 crore.

Since Tuesday ( a trading holiday), there were indications that the US may step back from its aggressive stance in the war against Iran. This raised hopes among investors globally that the current geopolitical uncertainty, including one of the worst energy crises that the world has faced, could soon start to taper off. As a result, crude prices started coming down, while rupee, combined with RBI's decisions to rein-in speculative trades, started strengthening. All these helped the day's rally, market players said. The day's smart up move added about Rs 9.6 lakh crore to investors' wealth with BSE's market capitalisation now at Rs 422 lakh crore, official data showed. With the US market showing northward movement, market players expect another session of gains for Indian stocks on Friday, provided no negative news hits the ticker overnight.

## Overseas investors get tax respite

**New Delhi:** The Income Tax Department has explicitly excluded income arising from transfer of investments made prior to April 1, 2017, from the ambit of General Anti Avoidance Rules (GAAR), thus settling a long-standing industry concern regarding retrospective applicability.

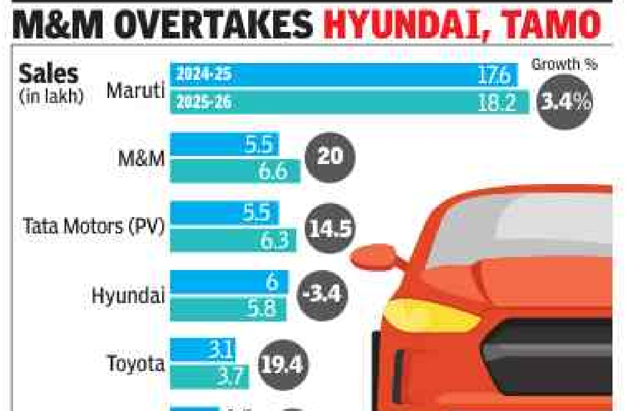
CBDT has amended Income-tax Rules, 2026, saying that any income accruing or received by any person from transfer of investments made before April 1, 2017, will not come under the GAAR.

AKM Global Partner-Tax Sandeep Sehgal, said the amendment to Rule 128 of the Income-tax Rules, 2026 is largely clarificatory in nature and helps remove ambiguity around GAAR grandfathering. AGENCIES

# Auto cos cite cost pressure amid strong dispatches

Times News Network

**M&M OVERTAKES HYUNDAI, TAMO**




**New Delhi:** Major car makers have reported double-digit growth in wholesale dispatches in March. While the conflict in West Asia has not dampened consumer demand in India, it has increased the cost pressure, companies said. Dispatches in last financial year (2025-26) also remained healthy.

Several auto makers, including Tata Motors, JSW MG, BMW, Mercedes-Benz and Audi have already announced price hikes from April 1, citing higher input and logistics costs, with increases ranging between 0.5% and 2%. Maruti Suzuki is also seeking to raise prices. Industry estimates (provided by Tata Motors and Maruti Suzuki) showed total passenger vehicle dispatches rose to about 47 lakh units in FY26 from 43.3 lakh in FY25, showing a growth of 8.2%.

Maruti Suzuki reported domestic sales of 18.2 lakh units in 2025-26. M&M recorded strong growth to sell 6.6 lakh units in FY26 to overtake Tata Motors and Hyundai, which sold 6.3 lakh units and 5.8 lakh units respectively.

Despite strong demand, companies flagged rising costs due to the uncertain geopolitical situation. "Cost pressures are the only headwind we are facing and we need to take a call on how much cost we need to pass on to the customer... right now we are absorbing the cost, but we cannot keep on absorbing it," Partho Banerjee, head of marketing and sales, told **TOI**.

Industry executives said longer shipping routes and component costs are adding to pressure, though there was no change in production plans.

Gaurav Vangaal, associate director at S&P Global Mobility, said March volumes were boosted by year-end targets and festive demand but warned of cost pressures ahead. "Rising input costs, a weaker rupee and supply chain disruptions are set to weigh on demand in the months ahead," he said.

"Growth momentum is expected to sustain, led by SUVs, CNGs and EVs. The industry will need to closely monitor geopolitical developments to mitigate potential supply-side risks," Shailesh Chandra, MD and CEO of Tata Motors Passenger Vehicles, said.

Ravi Bhatia, president of JATO Dynamics India, said the demand base has strengthened post-GST 2.0, but risks remain. "Near-term volumes should hold up well, but sustained cost inflation will test elasticity later in the year," he said, adding, crude prices, currency movement and supply chain disruptions will be key factors to watch.

## Bandaru to head Wipro's AI-native unit

**Bengaluru:** Wipro has announced a series of leadership changes as it sharpens its focus on AI-led growth and strengthens its global business lines.

**Nagendra Bandaru**, president and managing partner of technology services global business lines (GBLs), will move into a newly created role as CEO of the AI-native business and platforms unit. He will continue to serve as senior managerial personnel (SMP) of the company.

Having spent over two decades at Wipro, Bandaru has played a key role in some of the company's largest M&A transactions, including the acquisition of HealthPlan Services (HPS), a US-based public-private healthcare exchange. He was also instrumental in Aon Hewitt's (now Alight Solutions) outsourcing of global operations to Wipro, leading the integration of around 9,000 employees. Kanwar Singh will succeed Bandaru as president and managing partner of technology services GBLs and will also be part of the company's SMP cadre. Singh brings more than three decades of experience in driving large-scale IT delivery and digital transformation initiatives across industries such as retail, manufacturing and travel.

In another change, Suzanne Dann will step down as CEO of the Americas-2 Strategic Market Unit to pursue opportunities outside Wipro and will cease to be an SMP. She had taken on the role after joining Wipro in April last year as senior vice-president for capital markets and insurance and was also part of the company's executive board. TNN

**A thought for today**

*America...just a nation of 200mn used car salesmen, with all the money we need to buy guns, and no qualms about killing anybody else*

**HUNTER S THOMPSON**

# The Battered Half

*When we celebrate women high achievers, we tend to forget how deeply gender-unequal worklife is*

India's richest civic body, BMC, has a woman boss. That is swag achievement, by far. Mumbai now has three women in the financial capital's administrative leadership – municipal commissioner, mayor and BMC's leader of opposition – a nod to working women everywhere. And yet, can the framework for equality be gilded by only the firsts? Much as every 'first' – from breaking into male-dominated spheres to breaking out of stereotyped roles – is every bit worth celebrating, it is *equal representation*, in numbers and pay, via access, agency and accountability, that's the real deal. Take Indian politics. So many women politicians in a variety of powerful firsts, yet, '33%' is such a long haul, and still a distance away.

Take the world of work. Barely 32% of women in working-age population are even part of the labour force. Of these, 80% are in 'vulnerable' employment – informal, low-quality, unevenly paid. Just 15% are in regular, salaried jobs, wildly disproportionate to their college enrolment, that's almost equal to men's. Worklife, for even this 15%, is precarious. Career growth, name any sector, is painful – judiciary, industry, tech, media, you name it. In private sector, women freshers earn 15% less than men with similar qualifications, in comparable roles. This gap widens to 25% in senior roles. Women, on average, earn 27% less than men in India (ILO 2023). There's no real '*why*' to this. It's a mix of hardwired cultural attitudes, different roles, and some suggest, "negotiating skills". Problem is, onus of minding/mending these gaps seems to lie on women. But, regulation *has* forced almost all large companies to have at least one woman director, even if for sake of compliance. Even if male directors earn three and a half times more than women counterparts. Further, IMF has long held "increasing women's labour force participation...(results in) large gains in economic welfare...women's complementary skills raise productivity, boosting wages for everyone." It's not a 'women's issue', it's a GDP issue.

Given the odds, patriarchy to policy, stacked against women, in reaching leadership positions, top performers do stand out, for better or worse. But there's a certain irony in celebrating achievers, whether women, or from a demographic minority. For, what becomes vividly clear is that such achievement remains rare even in 21st century India. Limelight on the high-flyers only increases the glare on the hopelessly unequal worklives of women.

# Art Of The State

*Nation-states have a bloody history. Idiosyncratic micronations aren't the answer, but they do make us think*

Francisco Castillo, Iowan and Trump voter, doesn't want war. Isfahan resident Saman doesn't want it either. He's shocked and angry – war is worse than his worst nightmare. But what can they do if their govts are bent upon it? Times like these make you want to throw off the yoke of state and citizenship. As John Lennon sang, "Imagine there's no countries." Either that, or have a billion nations. Some constituted as societies of 15 or 20, others as a community of one. No man an island, as Donne said, but each one a state.

Locke thought that was the way we were, before we formed communities for "comfortable, safe, and peaceable living". Which is the exact opposite of what Trump's bombardment of Iran, and Iran's blockade of Hormuz, have achieved. In fact, the short history of nation-states has more blood on its pages than the rest of Holocene, starting 11,700 years ago. Could we fix it by becoming Rousseau's "noble savages" again? To find out, we can look at "micronations" like Slowjamastan in California. Its only no-nos are Crocs – the footwear – and reply-all emails.

Estimates of micronations – they have no legal standing – vary, but there are at least 45 across the world. A good many were set up this century, while some date back to the 1800s. And while their idiosyncrasies make us smile, they are hardly the noble ideal we seek. Germany's Reichsburgers, who have their own currency, flag and ID cards, were accused of attempting to "overthrow the state" a few years ago. But racism is their bigger vice. Redonda, the oldest microstate of all, made an English pub its "embassy", to shield it diplomatically from Britain's smoking ban. That's no better than TACO trades. So, we need a better fix for our nation-states. Thomas More's Utopians had a good idea: they sacked their princes for tyranny.

# Starry, starry blight

*Planetary dysjunction for the astroffender*

**Bachi Karkaria**

Maharashtra's Ashok Kharat is the latest in the long, inglorious line of godless 'godmen'. Having caused so much *shok*, he has fittingly come to grief himself. 'Rigged' out as an astrologer too, he claimed twice the heavenly access. Under cover of this, he allegedly raped, robbed, and killed, including ghoulish human sacrifice. There's enough unhappiness and unvarnished greed for the indigent and the influential alike to fall prey while being told to pray.

Prime and chief ministers have infamously come under the sway of charlatans in saint's clothing. In the current case, while senior names have been dropped, only a comparatively minor official has dropped out. Guess what? She was state president of NCP's women's wing.

But, *ji*, could all this actually be some kind of professional hazard? If astrologers lie – and forcibly lay – does the fault lie not in themselves, but in star-signs *per se*? The Western/Vedic zodiac does seem to reflect criminal behaviour of the Kharat kind.

Like Aries/Mesha, they are battering ram. They ram themselves into women rendered helpless; Kharat did so with drug-laced water.

Virgo/Kanya? Nah! Mostly, the victims are/were married.

Like Taurus/Vrishabha, the bull, these sexual predators may fancy themselves as studs, but they are only horny.

**erratica**

Like Gemini/Mithun, Kharat presented the usual 'twin' identities of godman and astrologer, also twinning sexual abuse with cheating. A Kharat victim was promised 'charged' stones; they were only charged for, never delivered.

Like the Cancer/Karkata crab, followers get lulled into a pincer grip.

Leo/Simha? Ardent devotees see them as the power-suffused 'Lord', never suspecting that they'll get the jungle instead.

As for Libra/Tula, *guru-chela* balance is never equal. Hope the scales of justice are.

Like Scorpio/Vrischika, this fake-o's sting is in the tail.

Like Sagittarius/Dhanu, he's man above, beast below.

Capricorn/Makkar? The Sea Goat is ruled by Saturn; remember *Shani's* malefic influence?

Unlike Aquarius/Kumbha, these nasties have little 'flow of wisdom'.

Liken their actions more to fishy Pisces/Meena.

***

**Alec Smart said: "This Easter weekend, let's crucify war-mongers and resurrect peace."**

# Finally, Hammered & Sickled?

*If CPM-led LDF loses in Kerala on May 4, India will see its first Left-free govt landscape in nearly half a century. The bigger story? Communist parties failed to find a new vocabulary for new India*

**Indrajeet.Rai**@timesinternet.in

On May 4, Kerala may end up delivering a result bigger than its own election. If LDF loses, India will, for the first time in nearly half a century, have no Left govt anywhere in the country. The symbolism would be hard to miss. Just three days after May 1, celebrated across the world as Labour Day, India could find itself effectively without a governing communist outpost.

That would mark the end of an extraordinary run. Since Jyoti Basu took office in West Bengal in June 1977, there has never been a day without a Left govt in India. When Bengal fell in 2011, Tripura remained red. When Tripura fell in 2018, Kerala was already back under Pinarayi Vijayan.

**The great shrinkage** | In parliamentary politics, Left went from 61 Lok Sabha seats in 2004 to 9 in 2024. That is not a routine electoral dip. It's the collapse of a national current into a few shrinking pockets.

This is not just an electoral story. It's the outcome of a much longer structural shift that hollowed out Left's social base, diluted its ideological appeal, and weakened its organisational edge.

Start with the economy. Communist politics in India drew strength from organised workers, public-sector unions, and agrarian interests. That made sense in an era of state-led industrialisation, and durable union power. But India's growth story changed. Since 1991, growth has been driven by services, informal work, private enterprise, and aspiration-led consumption.

Left was often right in warning that liberalisation would deepen inequality, informalise labour, and strain public services. But politically, it struggled to speak to the new India taking shape. To an urban lower-middle-class family, "reform" often sounded less like exploitation than opportunity. To a young graduate, anti-liberalisation rhetoric could sound like hostility to mobility itself.

The problem was not only economics. It was language. Communist parties remained more fluent in opposing "imperialism" and "neo-liberalism" than in addressing the anxieties of the new voter: exam pressure, private education costs, insecure white-collar work, urban rent, healthcare bills, and the unstable dignity of gig labour. India still has vast economic distress. But much of that distress no longer organises itself through classical class vocabulary.

**Identity & the welfare trap** | From 1980s onward, Indian politics was restructured by Mandal, Mandir, and regional assertion. Caste, religion, language, and sub-national pride became more powerful vehicles of mobilisation than class solidarity. Many of these movements borrowed from egalitarian traditions and social justice thinkers. But beneficiaries were not communist parties. For a landless Dalit labourer in Uttar Pradesh, BSP often looked like a more direct route to dignity than Left parties. For an OBC voter in Bihar, RJD could feel closer to both self-respect and patronage. Left spoke of combining class and caste, but rarely reorganised itself deeply enough to put subordinated castes at the centre of leadership and strategy.

**Milestones of the Left in India** TOI

**1957 – Kerala**
- World's 1st Democratically Elected Communist Govt.
- EMS Namboodiripad's CPI makes history.

**1977 – West Bengal**
Beginning of 34 years of Left Front Rule. CPM coalition takes power.

**1978 – Tripura**
Left Front debuts; later 25-year uninterrupted rule from 1993–2018.

**1996 – United Front**
- Key role in Union Govt.
- Jyoti Basu famously refuses PM offer ("Historic blunder").

**2004 – UPA alliance**
Crucial outside support for the UPA. Left exerts significant influence.

**2008 – Nuclear deal split**
Left withdraws support from UPA, citing sovereignty concerns.

**2011 – End in West Bengal**
34-year Left rule ends to TMC, a major turning point.

**2018 – End in Tripura**
25-year Left rule ends with the power shift to BJP, changing state landscape.

Meanwhile, BJP built a different kind of mass politics: Hindu consolidation paired with welfare delivery. That was perhaps Left's biggest political setback. Welfare, once Left's moral terrain, was absorbed by larger parties. Under UPA, rights-based welfare expanded sharply. Under Modi, welfare was repackaged as targeted, leader-driven delivery: free rations, toilets, gas cylinders, cash support, housing. In electoral politics, voters rarely reward the party that first imagined a policy. They reward the party they believe can deliver it.

That left communists squeezed from both sides: identity politics on one side, delivery politics on the other.

**Self-inflicted wounds** | In Bengal and Tripura, long years in office bred inertia. Cadres hardened into establishments. Renewal slowed. Singur and Nandigram damaged the moral compact the Bengal Left had built with rural poor. Elsewhere, strategy oscillated between rigidity and confusion: too doctrinaire at one moment, too opportunistic at another. Even sympathisers were left unsure what Left now stood for beyond opposing whoever was dominant.

Kerala has been the exception, which is why this election matters so much. Left there adapted better, governed more competently, and retained a recognisable social base. But even Kerala cannot by itself reverse a national trend. If it falls, the arc will be complete: the movement that first made history in Kerala in 1957, may see its last governing chapter close there too.

There's irony here beyond Labour Day. At the extreme end of the Left spectrum, the Naxalite movement too appears close to exhaustion, pushed back by sustained security pressure, surrenders, and state penetration into once-insulated zones.

**End of history or long eclipse?** | Predicting elections is a fool's errand. Vijayan may lead Left to another victory. But if Kerala falls on May 4, for the first time in nearly 50 years, no chief minister in India will come from a communist party. It may look like Francis Fukuyama's "end of history" moment for the Indian Left.

Of course, Fukuyama's imagined future did not come true completely, even in the West. Democracy, the supposed bandwagon of history, is itself in recession, and authoritarianism is creeping forward in many parts. The election of socialist Zohran Mamdani as mayor of New York, the so-called capital of Capitalism, shows that all may not be lost for Left. But, one Mamdani is not enough to claim that history may be on its return journey.

For the Indian Left, the issue is no longer whether history has ended, but whether it still has some compelling story to tell, to have any say in India's political journey.

# How's India's Economy Coping With The War?

**So far, not badly. High forex reserves & low inflation cushioned the first blows. GOI's managed to avoid a crude oil supply shock. It all depends now, on when the conflict ends**

**Neeraj Kaushal**

India's goldilocks moment is, perhaps, gone. Oil and gas import bills have been rising, amidst huge uncertainties of supplies. Rupee depreciated 3.5% in the month since the Iran war began, and 10% over the past year. Anantha Nageswaran, India's chief economic adviser, says the war will result in "considerable downside to FY27 growth estimate of 7-7.4%". While he stopped short of saying by how much, leading global investment banks and rating agencies are out with their revised numbers. Goldman Sachs and Moody's Analytics have revised their GDP growth forecasts to around 5.9-6.1%.

Last year, Nageswaran had projected that Trump's 50% tariffs on India would reduce India's GDP growth by 0.5-0.6%. Goldman Sachs and Moody's Analytics forecasts suggest a projected damage from the Iran war on India's GDP growth to be at least twice as much. That may sound ominous, but frankly a GDP growth forecast of close to 6% is quite impressive, given the global economic scene and India's precarious situation. If the war continues and rupee depreciates further, expect downward revisions to these forecasts.

Nageswaran listed four channels through which the Iran war would affect India: supply disruptions in oil, gas, and fertilisers; higher import prices; rising logistics costs, including for freight and insurance; and a potential dip in remittances. Remittances, however, can even rise if migrants begin remitting larger amounts before returning to India. Or if, in response to a sharper depreciation of the rupee, they increase their remittances. But the first three channels will certainly impact growth negatively, and the consequences will worsen if the war goes on for a longer period.

That said, I believe India is in a better position to face the economic blows from the Iran war, than in the face of similar shocks in the recent past. It was in a 'sweet spot' before the war began – sitting on a $700bn pile of forex reserves, with retail inflation a mere 1.3% in 2025. Both will change. The important thing is not to panic if prices begin to rise, or reserves fall to $500bn. Reserves are to be used during crises, and what we are facing amidst the Iran war and Trump's tariff attacks, is the mother of all crises.

For now, India has managed its oil and gas needs well. GOI has acquired two months of crude supply, and secured access to approximately one full month of LPG supply. It has effectively diversified its sources of oil and gas. India is receiving more crude from its 41+ suppliers across the world, than what was previously arriving through the Hormuz Strait, claims the petroleum and natural gas ministry. Well done.

Image: AI

Yet, calling India "an oasis of energy security", as a ministry press release did last week, is making a travesty of a grave situation. A country that depends on imports for almost 90% of its oil, cannot be an oasis of energy security, at a time crude price is oscillating around $100 a barrel, and chances are that it may stay at that level, or even rise, for weeks, even months, to come. GOI sounds like it's mocking the fears and insecurities of thousands of Indians, who are standing in lines to get an LPG cylinder.

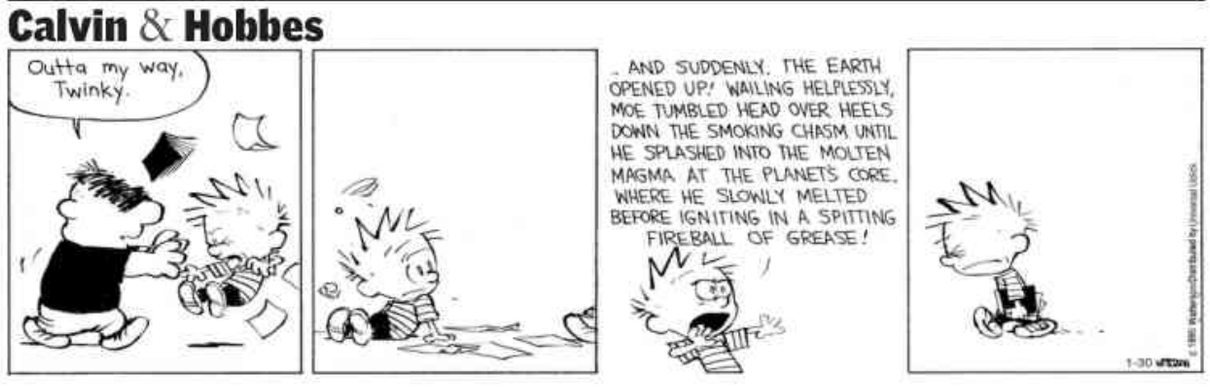
It is true that the recent shortage of LPG cylinders is both supply and demand driven. People panic when they hear that something as essential as cooking gas, may become too expensive, or not be available at all. Cylinder demand shot up to 89L cylinders a day, from the normal daily demand of 56L, and is now back to the original numbers. Yet, overall consumption of LPG fell close to 18% in the first half of March, reflecting supply disruptions.

The claim that India is energy secure also underestimates the fiscal fragility associated with energy shocks. War has already disrupted shipping, raised freight costs, and strained sectors like pharma and fertilisers. Rising global prices often compel govt to cut fuel taxes, as GOI did recently, or expand subsidies, which will strain public finances. True energy security requires not just access to supplies, but resilience to price volatility and external disruptions. India remains vulnerable, as do most countries of the world, including US, which is a net exporter of oil and gas, and has been energy surplus since 2019.

The biggest uncertainty is how long the war will last and what would be its impact on the price of oil. Commentary from strategic experts is not very informative, even if Trump, who is fighting the war with an eye on the US midterm elections in Nov, is dying to declare a US victory. In the end, emerging economies like India end up with huge costs from a war in which they have little to gain.

*The writer is Professor of Social Policy, Columbia University*

**Calvin & Hobbes**




**Sacred***space*

*Hanuman summed up his philosophy in these words: When i identify myself with the body, O Lord, i am thy creature, eternally separate from thee... But when i identify with the Atman, i and Thou art one.*

**Swami Vivekananda**

# Hanuman: The Emblem Of Devotion

**Radhanath Swami**

Hanuman is one of the most loved personalities in all of India. He is not just present in temples, rather, he lives in hearts of people. Across villages and cities, in homes and on streets, his name is remembered with affection and faith.

What makes Hanuman so special? Hanuman's trademark devotion for Ram, his eagerness to serve, his highly refined character and conduct, and his mighty strength speak volumes about him.

From his very childhood, Hanuman's extraordinary nature was evident. Once, seeing the rising sun, he mistook it for a delicious fruit and leapt into the sky to catch it. Struck by Indra's thunderbolt on his chin, he fell down. As a result, his father, the wind god got angry and suffocated the whole universe. Devatas, wanted to appease the wind god, and being pleased by Hanuman's innocence and strength, blessed Hanuman with extraordinary abilities. His childhood was filled with energy, playfulness, and divine charm, bringing joy to his parents and all around him.

Hanuman first met Ram in Kishkindha, the present-day heritage site Hampi. In that very first meeting, he recognised his eternal master Ram. That very moment, he surrendered his mind, body and words in serving Ram, without distraction or diversion.

There is a beautiful narration that captures his devotion. When asked what resided in his heart, Hanuman tore open his chest, revealing Ram and Sita seated within. Hanuman's entire existence was for Ram.

When Mother Sita was abducted by the mighty Ravan, it was Hanuman who rose to the occasion. While crossing the vast ocean, he faced many challenges. He effortlessly overcame those obstacles through his might and devotion to Ram. After reaching Lanka, Hanuman successfully found Sita in Ashok Vatika. Sita recognised Hanuman as Ram's messenger only because of the sweet narrations from Hanuman. Carrying Ram's ring, Hanuman delivered hope to Sita in the midst of despair.

Though he appeared small when he approached her, Hanuman revealed his vast form when Sita wondered how he could carry her back. Hanuman replied, "I am very small, but for the service of Ram, i can take up any size." Hanuman's humility was extremely endearing to Sita.

Hanuman not only found Sita, but also burnt Lanka and returned with vital information. During the battle, he flew to the Himalayas twice to bring life-saving herbs for Ram and Lakshman.

Hanuman's valour was unmatched, yet he saw himself as insignificant. His knowledge was deep, yet he considered himself a fool before Ram. His power was limitless, yet he remained completely humble. And above all, he never claimed credit for anything he did.

Pleased with his service, Ram once said, "I have nothing to give you except my embrace." That embrace made Hanuman the dearest servant of the Lord.

Just as Hanuman played an important role in uniting Ram and Sita, even a small contribution or a squirrel's effort in the service of the Lord can make our lives meaningful. Lord is pleased with the attitude of our service, and not with the magnitude. Ram grants freedom from fear to anyone who surrenders even once.

And Hanuman's surrender was not momentary. He surrendered to the will of Ram every single day.

*The writer is spiritual guru, International Society for Krishna Consciousness*

THE SPEAKING TREE

# There's A Martin Everywhere

## As three family members of lottery baron Santiago Martin — his wife, son and son-in-law — enter the electoral fray for the first time, observers say this signals an expansion of their footprint in Tamil Nadu and Puducherry

Mayilvaganan.V@timesofindia.com

For years, Santiago Martin's family was associated with political influence from the sidelines. In the 2026 assembly elections, it is seeking a more direct stake in govt in Tamil Nadu and Puducherry.

As the two prepare to vote — Puducherry on April 9 and Tamil Nadu on April 23 — three members of the Martin family are in the fray. Martin's wife, Leema Rose Martin, is the AIADMK nominee from Lalgudi in Trichy. His son, Jose Charles Martin, founder of Latchiya Jananayaga Katchi (LJK), is contesting from Kamaraj Nagar in Puducherry as part of the AINRC-BJP alliance. Santiago's son-in-law, Aadhav Arjuna, general secretary of Tamilaga Vettri Kazhagam (TVK), is contesting from Villivakkam in Chennai.

### First Time In The Fray

For all three, this election marks their electoral debut. But that is not the only thing that has drawn attention; their growing clout has as well.

Within TVK, Aadhav Arjuna is seen as one of the more influential faces in the party's inner circle. In Puducherry, Charles managed to secure a place in the BJP-led alliance despite opposition from sections of AINRC, including founder N Rangasamy.

Charles insists the family's political foray was not part of a coordinated strategy. "In a vibrant democracy, it is not mandatory for every family member to subscribe to the same political ideology," he says.

Their rise, however, comes as little surprise to those who have tracked their moves. Charles, 38, chose Puducherry as his political launchpad two years ago. He says the compact Union territory, with a population of roughly 10 lakh, fits his vision of transforming it into a modern enclave on the lines of Dubai or Singapore. "Here, I can show results faster," says Charles, who is also managing director of Martin Group.

His entry into Puducherry politics was facilitated by BJP leader John Kumar, who had business links with the Martin family. Charles first built a grassroots presence through Jose Charles Mandram, a welfare platform that distributed benefits on the ground, before floating LJK in Dec 2025. Though he initially planned to contest all 30 seats and project himself as a chief ministerial candidate, he later aligned with the BJP-led front and was allotted two seats.

That move nearly strained AINRC-BJP ties, with Rangasamy wary of associating himself with the lottery baron's family and briefly walking out of alliance discussions before returning after intervention from the BJP leadership.

Leema Rose Martin, managing trustee of Martin Foundation, is contesting as the AIADMK nominee from Lalgudi in Trichy

> "In a vibrant democracy, it is not mandatory for every family member to subscribe to the same political ideology
> —Jose Charles Martin, FOUNDER, LJK

Leema's entry into AIADMK has been just as swift. The managing trustee of Martin Foundation had spent 14 years in T R Paarivendhar's Indhiya Jananayaga Katchi, though she never contested an election. Soon after joining AIADMK in Feb, she was appointed the party's women's wing joint secretary and has now been fielded from Lalgudi.

While there was initial resistance within AIADMK ranks over her sudden rise, party functionaries say she has managed to win over sections of the cadre. The DMK, for its part, sees her as a serious challenger in Lalgudi — a seat it has held since 2006. "The fight has got tougher as four-time MLA Soundarapandian has not been given a ticket this time," says a DMK functionary.

Aadhav Arjuna, TVK

Leema's choice of Lalgudi is being seen as strategic by many. Though she is from Devakottai in Ramanathapuram district, she chose Lalgudi because of its sizeable Udayar and Christian voter base, say AIADMK cadre.

Meanwhile, Aadhav Arjuna's influence within TVK has grown steadily since he joined the party in Feb 2025. Party insiders say he plays a key role in decision-making and has been closely involved in senior leadership engagements.

### From Donors To Contenders

Though political observers argue that the family's growing influence is closely tied to its financial clout, Charles dismisses the suggestion. "Reducing our acceptance among the masses to mere financial influence is a desperate attempt to belittle our efforts," he says.

Santiago Martin has long maintained proximity to politics, emerging as one of the largest donors to major parties, including the DMK, AIADMK and BJP, through electoral bonds. ECI data shows his company, Future Gaming and Hotel Services Pvt Ltd, purchased electoral bonds worth Rs 1,368 crore between 2019 and 2024.

What has changed now is that the family is no longer operating from the sidelines.

But all may not be well within the family. Charles has publicly criticised Aadhav Arjuna, citing ideological differences, and alleged that he scuttled a potential alliance between LJK and TVK. "He has victimised my family. I have suffered because of him," says Charles.

Nevertheless, political observers say these moves signal the Martin family's steadily expanding footprint in electoral politics.

# DMK & ADMK not in fray in 21 seats, can allies prove mettle?

Ram.Sundaram
@timesofindia.com

**Chennai:** In a closely contested election, 21 constituencies in Tamil Nadu will go to polls without the DMK's rising sun or the AIADMK's two leaves symbol on the ballot.

In these seats, candidates of alliance partners of DMK and AIADMK will contest against each other on their own symbols. The increase from 11 such seats in 2021 reflects the growing role of smaller parties in alliance arithmetic and gives parties such as TVK and NTK an opening to improve their electoral performance.

BATTLEGROUND TAMIL NADU

"Both parties have factored in vote transfers from smaller parties. DMK chief M K Stalin has brought over 20 parties into his alliance after assessing that partners can contribute between 5,000 and 20,000 votes in a constituency," psephologist R Chandrasekaran said. This has resulted in a higher seat share for allies, with several parties opting to contest on their own symbols.

"The entry of actor Vijay's TVK has altered calculations for both DMK and AIADMK-led alliances, as victory margins are expected to be smaller compared with previous elections," he added.

From perspective of TVK and NTK, these constituencies offer openings. "Any day, not having a rising sun or two leaves in the contest is a relief for third or fourth fronts. However, they have to work hard, as some of these 21 seats are strongholds of alliance partners," said V Bharathi, a political analyst who has worked in war rooms of national parties.

For instance, Thalli has been a CPI stronghold, with the party winning the seat thrice. Virudhachalam, where Vijayakant's DMDK won in 2006 and 2011, sees his wife Premallatha returning after a 15-year gap. In Kattumannarkoil, a VCK bastion, leader Thol Thirumavalavan is in the fray. Nine of the 21 constituencies are currently held by Congress MLAs.

"Alliance picks are backed by local netas with an established voter base. To compete, TVK and NTK will need candidates with local presence and influence," Bharathi added.

**PARTY ALLIES CONTESTING UNDER THEIR OWN SYMBOL**

| SEAT | CONTEST |
|---|---|
| Sholinghur | Congress vs PMK |
| Pennagaram | |
| Mayiladuthurai | |
| Dharmapuri | DMDK vs PMK |
| Polur | |
| Salem (West) | |
| Virudhachalam | |
| Kattumannarkoil | VCK vs PMK |
| Tiruporur | |
| Gandharvakottai | CPI(M) vs BJP |
| Padmanabhapuram | |
| Udhagamandalam | Congress vs BJP |
| Aranthangi | |
| Vilavancode | |
| Killiyoor | |
| Colachel | |
| Karaikudi | Congress vs AMMK |
| Nanguneri | |
| Thalli | CPI vs BJP |
| Periyakulam | VCK vs AMMK |
| Kilvelur | CPI(M) vs PMK |

NUMBER OF CONTESTS IN PREVIOUS POLLS
- 2021: 11
- 2016: Nil (All of AIADMK's allies contested under two-leaves)

# lst in 74yrs: No seat for Left in Kovai

Aishwarya.S@timesgroup.com

**Coimbatore:** Coimbatore, often referred to as the 'Manchester of Tamil Nadu', once held the distinction of being a stronghold of Leftist movements. Electoral records show that CPM has won five times in Coimbatore East constituency, and twice each in Perur and Singanallur. CPI has won twice in Valparai, but this is the first time in the state's electoral history that the Left has not fielded candidates in any of Coimbatore's 10 assembly constituencies, ending a 74-year-long uninterrupted presence since 1952.

The move has shocked many, especially since the Left has been actively contesting elections in the district, which houses several industries, for decades, championing workers' rights and welfare. Regardless of victory or defeat, their consistent electoral participation had become a defining feature of the Coimbatore's political landscape.

CPI state treasurer and former MLA M Arumugam recalled the historical role of the Left in the undivided region, which once comprised Tirupur and Erode.

He credited Left-backed unions for forming workers' organizations, including those for women, and for securing key labour rights such as fair wages, Employees' State Insurance, and provident fund benefits. Party netas attributed the situation to seat-sharing within alliances. During talks, CPI and CPM had expected allocations in constituencies like Valparai and Singanallur. But instead, DMK ally Congress got Singanallur and Kavundampalayam.

Arumugam said the development could demoralize party workers, especially in an industrial region where Left activity has benefited labourers. Still, he emphasised that the primary objective remains to defeat forces supporting privatization, pro-corporate policies and dilution of labour laws. He said the Left cadres were actively working for the victory of the DMK-led secular progressive alliance. CPM district secretary Padmanabhan said, "We will continue to work for the success of our alliance partners."

# Modi hits Assam trail with salvo at Cong plot to bring 'dangerous law'

Prabin.Kalita@timesofindia.com

**Guwahati:** PM Narendra Modi urged voters in Assam Wednesday to stay vigilant against an alleged Congress plot to bring what he described as "a dangerous law", harking back to the contentious Communal Violence Bill drafted in 2013 by the then UPA govt.

"Based on that bill, the majority community was to be held responsible for riots while minorities were always considered victims. The bill itself was communal. That is why BJP-led NDA fought hard and did not allow its passage in Parliament," Modi said while opening his Assam campaign with a rally at Dhemaji district's Gogamukh.

"You have liberated Assam from Congress's misrule. Congress is now engaged in a different game."

IANS

CHAI PE CHARCHA: PM Narendra Modi with tea garden workers in Dibrugarh

The PM predicted that despite indications of Congress being ready to "do anything" to return to office, BJP was poised to complete a hat trick in Assam while its rival was headed for "a century of defeats". "Before Independence, Muslim League played the game of dividing the country. The same work Congress is doing today. Congress wants to protect foreigners in Assam and turn the original sons and daughters of the state into a minority. We are all witnessing this crisis in many districts of Assam," he said.

Modi also accused Congress of "stabbing Ambedkar's Constitution" in the back by prioritising family interests over public welfare and compromising Assam's "aatma, shaan, pehchan and suraksha". At Manohari tea estate in Dibrugarh, Modi interacted with 19 women pluckers while they were at work inside the plantation, enquiring about their families, children's education and wages.

# TMC distances itself from Mahua remark

Saikat Ray & Tamaghna Banerjee | TNN

**Kolkata:** Trinamool Congress distanced itself Wednesday from MP Mahua Moitra's remark questioning the role of Gujaratis in India's freedom movement after a backlash in Bengal CM Mamata Banerjee's constituency Bhowanipore, apologising to the community for what it said was an "irresponsible" insinuation made without the party's approval.

While Moitra was unavailable for comment, local Trinamool councillor Ashim Basu released a video elaborating the party's stand on the row, including a WhatsApp message from chief minister Mamata in which she purportedly expressed "regret" for what the MP said.

"Our party supremo was very upset and immediately decided to apologise to the Gujarati community for such unwanted comments. I heaved a sigh of relief when our party chief intervened," Basu said in English, Hindi and Gujarati.

# Priyanka pushes 'slave of the US' narrative in Assam

Kangkan.Kalita1
@timesofindia.com

**Guwahati:** Congress MP Priyanka Gandhi Vadra accused PM Narendra Modi of acting as a "slave" of the US and termed Assam CM Himanta Biswa Sarma as Modi's "slave" on Wednesday. She alleged BJP wanted to retain a "double Ghulami govt" in Assam and reduce the people of the state to slavery.

Addressing a poll rally in Nazira for party candidate Debabrata Saikia, Priyanka alleged women were being compelled to attend rallies of the PM and the CM in exchange for benefits under govt schemes. She alleged job opportunities were on the wane while inflation was rising. She accused the CM was engrossed in corruption. Priyanka also accused the PM and the CM of reneging on the promise of granting an ST status to six communities.

# Bengal CEO office turns fortress after Form 6 protest

Kaushik Pradhan & Dwaipayan Ghosh | TNN

**Kolkata:** Heavy security was deployed outside the chief electoral officer's office in Kolkata Wednesday following a late-night meeting between CEO Manoj Agarwal and police commissioner Ajay Nand. The meeting followed sporadic clashes between Trinamool and BJP supporters over allegations of "illegal" Form 6 applications being submitted to the CEO office to delete voters.

The commissioner issued a notification expanding prohibitory orders under Section 163 to cover the entire Strand Road. Earlier, restrictions were limited to the CEO's office perimeter.

The measures were taken after the CEO office posted on Wednesday a message on its social media handle: "A councillor from Beleghata, along with some hooligans, gheraoed the CEO office and shouted slogans in the dead of night. Such antisocial activities will not be tolerated, and the law will take its own course."

# Stalin gives silent treatment to Vijay, calls EPS 'BJP stooge'

Deepak.Karthik
@timesofindia.com

**Trichy/Chennai:** Campaigning for the April 23 Assembly elections, Tamil Nadu chief minister M K Stalin on Wednesday launched a full-throttle attack on AIADMK general secretary Edappadi K Palaniswami at a rally in Trichy, describing him as a "complete Sanghi", while conspicuously avoiding any reference to TVK president Vijay.

Despite Vijay contesting from Trichy East and consistently targeting DMK and Stalin in his speeches, the CM refrained from responding during the campaign in the district. Instead, he fired salvos on Palaniswami and BJP, and sought to woo the minorities, who form a sizeable vote base in Trichy.

Stalin had refused to engage with Vijay's rhetoric in Karur as well, where 41 people were killed in a stampede at a TVK rally last year.

Training his guns on the AIDMK chief, Stalin said EPS defended CAA when BJP brought the legislation, but changed his stance and called it a "historical blunder" when he parted ways with BJP during 2024 Lok Sabha election. Daring Palaniswami to spell out his stand on the issue now, the DMK supremo accused AIADMK and its ally PMK of betraying minorities and Sri Lankan Tamils by supporting CAA.

Responding to Palaniswami's statement that even DMK had aligned with BJP in the past, Stalin said the DMK-BJP pact was an electoral alliance, while EPS, he alleged, had become BJP's "stooge" and a "total Sanghi". "We aligned with (former PM Atal Bihari) Vajpayee with a common minimum programme and brought development projects to TN. But, you have mortgaged TN rights," he said.

The CM charged BJP with "avenging" TN because it was unable to win even a single seat in 2024 LS election.

# *Satsang, Spotlight, Stardust: An Ode To Tesseract*

Surya HK

A week that saw the resurfacing of Timothée Chalamet's hare-brained cultural provocation — opera and ballet are "obsolete," "no one cares" — The Times of India's magical musical, Tesseract, answered not with a clapback, but with choreography: an elegant, assertive inclusion of ballet, so ravishing it felt less like rebuttal, and more like revelation.

Tesseract reframed legacy as living organism, not museum piece, placing ballet where it has always belonged: in the bloodstream of the present. Art demonstrates what argument cannot.

The evening's spell began at the threshold: Interstellar music seemed to bend the entry hallway into a time tunnel, and a galaxy of **TOI** headlines and archival material unfolded: premonitory whispers that we were entering a theatre of multiple dimensions. Within minutes, I lost the ordinary measure of time; three and a half hours dissolved, with the hush and rush of a lucid dream.

I am writing after days of reflection and dreaming: reflecting... like the shards and mirrors of the 'Man in the Mirror' sequence; dreaming... like Sophia, the protagonist, whose journey, and her alter ego's, formed a double helix of identity. Their oscillation was so seamless, I often felt the flame flicker between two bodies of light, two musics of intention; a quiet triumph of performance craft and directorial design.

### Satsang: Association With Truth

What lingered were not effects, but after-effects: layers that adhere to the mind's inner surfaces, and keep releasing meaning. That peeling and unpeeling have not stopped. My spirit felt stirred; my imagination conscripted; new quadrants of thought opened, new coordinates for feeling were revealed.

Even when the show vaulted into spectacle, what gleamed most was restraint: the discipline that makes technology serve emotion, not smother it; that lets light reveal, rather than blind; that turns movement into syntax, rather than ornament.

Tesseract was the most exquisite narcotic for the soul. The benevolent kind, the satsang kind. It had the unmistakable charge, vibrations, and high, of a congregation gathered to listen for truth, to dwell in the company of those who have made a life of seeking it. In this sense, the show became a civic ritual: a room of seekers aligning, for a few hours, around questions that are older than the nation-state, and younger than each new dawn.

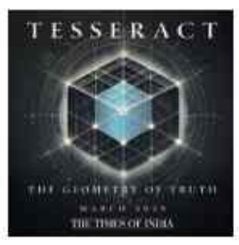
It entered my sleep the way good art does — in rapid succession of dreams and visions; a reminder that inner archives can be as unruly (and as luminous), as outer ones.

And then the finale: like origami, each crease and fold converged, until the very idea of the tesseract revealed itself; not as a stunt, but as the geometry of a thought (and truth) that had been, quietly, forming all night.

The eye for detail was relentless. The section on beauty and art, in particular, pinned me to my seat with its tenderness; it was an aria about what makes us human, and why the aesthetic is not indulgence but oxygen... a skein of beliefs, mythologies of meaning, turned into a theatre of belonging.

### Spotlight: Shining Light On The Truth

The stagecraft, from sets to lighting and automation, was cutting-edge in the only way that matters: ideas first, then electronics. Tesseract felt pioneering: rooted in Indian ethos, yet speaking fluently to the world; interweaving journalism's archive with theatre's alchemy, and technology's sleight of mind. The show assembled global expertise, and integrated live performance with large-scale LED, AR environments, illusion design, and a sweeping sound architecture... the kind of interdisciplinary rigour that does not imitate "international standards," but sets them.




Threaded through it all was an Indic grammar of courage: the old vow that truth is not a decree, but a discipline. Our epics remind us that the boldest journeys are often into ambiguity, and that to "know" is not to arrive, but to abide in inquiry. I found myself wondering — heresy though it may be to a masthead I love — whether **TOI**'s signature line might graduate from "Let Truth Prevail" to "The Geometry of Truth."

After all, what is "prevail" if the unasked question is 'what is truth?', and 'who gets to officiate it?' A quest into origami-like geometry invites us to seek, to question, to listen, to platform polyphonies of approach and opinion.

### Stardust: Tryst With Truth

If there is a roadshow destiny, Tesseract must meet it. Tour the country. Cross oceans. Reach for the stars.

May Act 2 bloom into Part 2, with the "future of the planet" chapter dilated into its own deep meditation. Imagine a movement from archival intelligence, which we now shorthand as artificial intelligence, into an epoch of planetary intelligence; where biodiversity, species empathy, and human-animal kinship are re-lit, as central plotlines, rather than footnotes.

Carol Hanisch, a second-wave feminist, is credited with popularising the slogan "The Personal is Political", through her influential 1969 essay of the same name. Tesseract seems born from the same transmutation: the rare and inspirational ability to take the personal, make it political, and then sublimate it into art. This, too, is why it moved me so much: it insisted that love scale into responsibility, and pain transform into purpose.

As a work of language and light, Tesseract oscillates between surrealism, pop art, and Kafkaesque narratives, visuals, motifs.

It is a composograph of cosmic intelligence; its architectonic, symbolic, haptic, figurative elements gather into a grammar of grandeur.

It is a show tinged with the aura of spiritual reverence, and multi-sensorial engagement.

It is saturated with and by illusion and illumination; pulsing with a transcorporeal rhythm and murmur that recalls the oldest theatre there is: the human body and mind, convincing itself it can hold more truth than yesterday.

And finally...the sprinkling of stardust. In Meera Jain's opening invocation of her son and grandson, the evening disclosed its lineage: pregnant with poise and panache; and yet, nine months of gestation for a vision like this feels, in hindsight, inevitable. A theatre-child born of travel, agency, care, curiosity, beauty, empathy, love, and familial imagination.

Not perfect, but pure. Not bound, but beautiful. Not tangible, but true.

# TIMES GLOBAL

THE TIMES OF INDIA, BENGALURU | THURSDAY, APRIL 2, 2026


I HAVEN'T SPOKEN TO MY WIFE IN YEARS. I DIDN'T WANT TO INTERRUPT HER — RODNEY DANGERFIELD

BLAKE LIVELY DANGLES IN THE AIR ON 'HUMAN CRANE' RIDE AS SHE SHARES SNAPS FROM POPULAR INDOOR THEME PARK

CARDI B SECURES LEGAL VICTORY AS JUDGE DISMISSES $50M COPYRIGHT INFRINGEMENT SUIT OVER SONG 'ENOUGH (MIAMI)'

# US allies weigh Iran outreach and sanctions to open Hormuz

## Military Option Not Ruled Out, May Go For It If Pushed To Extremes

A coalition of US allies is preparing a diplomatic push to persuade Iran to open the Strait of Hormuz and weighing potential sanctions on Tehran if the waterway remains closed. British foreign secretary Yvette Cooper will chair a virtual meeting on Thursday with counterparts from some 35 countries including France, Germany, Italy, Canada, Japan and UAE to discuss a plan to restore freedom of navigation in the strait. The US is not due to attend.

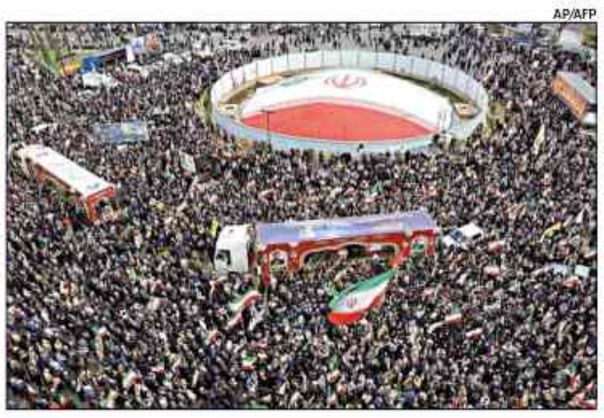
With the conflict now in its second month, re-opening the Strait of Hormuz has become a priority for govts around the world as energy prices soar and the threat of shortages looms.

The countries convened by Britain will cover three tracks: diplomatic, economic and military, according to people familiar with the matter, who were granted anonymity discussing information that has not been made public. The focus for now will be on the diplomatic track, coordinating efforts fronted by nations with channels into Tehran, the people said. Should that prove unsuccessful, the coalition would consider economic measures targeting Iran's oil and shipping industries, they added.

At a later date, the group could set conditions for potential military options if they were needed, the people said. They cautioned that these conversations were at an early stage and would not be the focus of Thursday's meeting. Any military track would likely only involve some of the countries in the coalition, and for many members it may be focused on helping police the waterway and clearing mines after the fighting had stopped, they said.

PM Starmer has ruled out joining the war and while French President Macron said on a visit to Tokyo Wednesday that European, Asian and West Asian countries "can play a role in ensuring that transit through the Strait of Hormuz proceeds smoothly," he insisted "this is not a military option at all." BLOOMBERG

AP/AFP



(Top) Iranians attend the funeral of Alireza Tangsiri, commander of the Iranian Revolutionary Guards' navy, at Enghelab Square in Tehran on Wednesday; (above) a firefighter at an attack site in Beirut, Lebanon

## Trump claims Iran wants a ceasefire; Iran says remarks 'false, baseless'

US President Trump Wednesday claimed Iran's president wanted a ceasefire ahead of his speech to the American people. Trump made the claim on his Truth Social website. Iran's foreign ministry spokesperson said Trump's remarks were "false and baseless." Trump struck a belligerent tone Wednesday in a Truth Social post, demanding that Iran stop blocking the Strait of Hormuz or the US would bomb the Islamic Republic "back to the Stone Ages." Trump also claimed Wednesday that "Iran's New Regime President" wanted a ceasefire. It wasn't clear to whom the US president was referring since Iran still has the same president. AP

## Rubio says US can see 'finish line' on Iran war

**Washington:** US secretary of state Marco Rubio said on Tuesday Washington could see the "finish line" in the Iran war, which is now in its fifth week, and the US will have to reexamine ties with Nato after the conflict. "We can see the finish line. It's not today, it's not tomorrow, but it is coming," Rubio told Fox News Channel's "Hannity" show. Rubio said there were messages being exchanged between Iran and the US and there is the potential to have a "direct meeting at some point" between the two sides.

Rubio also said "that there's nothing any govt is doing, or any country in the world is doing now to help Iran that is in any way impeding our mission." He added US will have to reexamine its relations with Nato after the Iran war. "Ultimately, that's a decision for the president to make...." REUTERS

## UAE asks UN to okay measures, including force, to open Hormuz

The UAE called on the UN to authorise a range of measures, including force, to reopen the Hormuz. In a letter dated Tuesday and addressed to the UN secretary general and the president of the Security Council, Mohamed Abushahab, the UAE's envoy to the UN, asked the council to take "immediate action". The UN's Chapter Seven — which the UAE cited in its letter — allows the Security Council to address threats to peace or acts of aggression by authorising the use of force or other measures, including economic blockades and severing diplomatic ties. BLOOMBERG

## Iran Guards say Strait of Hormuz 'will not be opened to enemies'

Iran's Revolutionary Guards insisted on Wednesday that the strategic Hormuz will remain closed to the country's "enemies". "The situation in the Strait of Hormuz is dominantly under the control of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps' naval forces," the Guards said in a statement, adding that it "will not be opened to the enemies of this nation". Meanwhile, the Financial Times reported that US President Trump had threatened to stop supplying weapons for Ukraine in order to pressure European allies to join a "coalition of the willing" to reopen the Hormuz. AGENCIES

# In a first, POTUS attends SCOTUS arguments on birthright citizenship

Chidanand Rajghatta & Reuters

**Washington:** In a scene without precedent in the 237-year history of the American judiciary, US President Donald Trump on Wednesday attended the Supreme Court hearing in the birthright citizenship case, highlighting the profound significance of the outcome even as critics saw his appearance as an attempt to intimidate the nine justices.

At the heart of the case is Trump's Jan 2025 executive order that seeks to dismantle the long-standing interpretation of the 14th Amendment, denying automatic citizenship to approximately 250,000 children born annually in the US to undocumented parents or temporary visa holders. The administration's architect for the argument, Solicitor General John Sauer, contended that the phrase "subject to the jurisdiction thereof" excludes those without "full allegiance" or permanent domicile in the US.

There are examples of 19th century presidents arguing cases before the court - though not while in office - including John Quincy Adams, Grover Cleveland and Benjamin Harrison. William Howard Taft, who served as president from 1909 to 1913, later became the chief justice on the Supreme Court. The President's presence in the court – unprecedented in its history – cast a foreboding shadow in the chamber where six of the nine justices are conservative, and three of them his nominees. Still, the hearing appeared to lean towards the respondents with at least two conservative justices sounding sceptical of govt's case. The bench questioned Sauer for two hours.

Representing the challengers, ACLU National Legal Director Cecillia Wang argued that birthright citizenship is an "indefeasible" right, applying to nearly everyone born on US soil except for the children of foreign diplomats or invading forces. While Wang held the podium, the intellectual "blueprint" for the opposition's case was visible in the research of Indian-American legal scholar Smita Ghosh. As a lead author of the "Brief of Scholars of Constitutional Law and Immigration," Ghosh's historical evidence—asserting that the 14th Amendment was explicitly intended to be status-blind—formed the backbone of the respondents' defence.

The challengers argue the Supreme Court already settled the question of birthright citizenship in an 1898 case called United States vs Wong Kim Ark, which recognised that the 14th Amendment grants citizenship by birth on US soil, including to the children of foreign nationals.

Conservative Chief Justice John Roberts told Sauer that his arguments limiting who qualifies for citizenship at birth seemed "quirky". Noting that historically the phrase "subject to the jurisdiction thereof" excluded the children of ambassadors or enemies during a hostile invasion, Roberts said Sauer is trying to expand those examples to everyone in the US illegally. "I'm not quite sure how you can get to that big group from such tiny and sort of idiosyncratic examples," Roberts said.

Roberts also challenged Sauer to provide evidence for the administration's stated concern over "birth tourism," by which foreigners travel to the US to give birth and secure citizenship for their children. "Do you have any information about how common that is or how significant a problem it is?" Roberts asked. "No one knows for sure," Sauer replied, while citing media reports of birth tourism firms abroad.

Liberal Justice Elena Kagan said the administration's interpretation of the 14th Amendment is not supported by the provision's text. "You're using some pretty obscure sources to get to this concept," Kagan told Sauer.

Conservative Justice Samuel Alito, posing a hypothetical scenario, asked Wang to address the administration's argument that birthright citizenship should be understood in light of an 1866 civil rights law that excluded citizenship for those who are "subject to any foreign power". "A boy is born here to an Iranian father who has entered the country illegally. That boy is automatically an Iranian national at birth, and he has a duty to provide military service to the Iranian govt," Alito said in his hypothetical situation. "Is he not subject to any foreign power?"

The administration contends that the 1898 precedent supports Trump's order because, according to the court's ruling in that case, at the time of his birth, Wong Kim Ark's parents had permanent domicile and residence in the US. Alito said the authors of the 14th Amendment could not have conceived of modern-day immigration patterns. "What we are dealing with here is something that was unknown at the time when the 14th Amendment was adopted, which was illegal immigration," Alito said.

With lower courts having blocked the order, the nation now waits for a final ruling, expected by early summer.

AFP

Demonstrators rally in support of birthright citizenship outside SCOTUS

# 'Ghosh reconstructs the historical context of precedents rather than merely citing them'

▶Continued from P1

Colleagues describe Smita Ghosh as a "historian's lawyer", someone who does not merely cite precedent but reconstructs the intellectual and legal world in which those precedents were formed. It is a method particularly suited to constitutional litigation, where original meaning and historical context often carry decisive weight.

At issue in Trump vs Barbara is the legality of a sweeping executive order seeking to restrict automatic citizenship for children born in the US to non-citizen parents lacking lawful status. The administration's argument hinges on a narrower reading of the Citizenship Clause — specifically, the phrase "subject to the jurisdiction thereof".

Central to Ghosh's approach is what has come to be known as the "Lynch vs Clarke strategy". In that pre-Civil War case, a New York court held that a child born in the US to non-citizen parents was nonetheless a citizen — a ruling grounded in common law traditions inherited from England. Ghosh's argument is that Lynch vs Clarke was not an outlier but a reflection of a settled legal understanding: that birth on US soil conferred citizenship regardless of parental status. By the time the Fourteenth Amendment was ratified in 1868, she contends, this principle was already firmly established.

Perhaps the most striking element of Ghosh's contribution to the case is what observers have dubbed the "foundling argument". Under longstanding US law — including provisions of the Nationality Act of 1940 — a child found abandoned on American soil is presumed to be a US citizen. Ghosh seizes on this doctrine to highlight what she views as a glaring inconsistency in the govt's position. If the law grants citizenship to a child of completely unknown origin, she argues, it would be legally "outlandish" to deny citizenship to a child whose birthplace is known but whose parents lack legal status.

The comparison is more than rhetorical. It underscores a core principle of her argument: that citizenship, as historically understood, depends on place of birth, not on the legal standing of one's parents. In this framing, the Citizenship Clause did not create a new right so much as constitutionalise an existing one — a safeguard against future political efforts to narrow or revoke it. The current Trump executive order, therefore, is not simply controversial; it is, in Ghosh's telling, a break from centuries of legal continuity.

Ghosh's influence extends beyond courtroom argument. Through the Constitutional Accountability Centre, she has led the drafting of multiple amicus briefs to provide historical and interpretive guidance to the justices. These briefs emphasise how the framers of the Fourteenth Amendment understood citizenship in the aftermath of the Civil War. Drawing on congressional debates, contemporaneous legal treatises, and early judicial decisions, Ghosh argues that the amendment was intended as a "promise of birth-equality"—a guarantee that all persons born on American soil would enjoy equal civic status at birth.

That historical framing directly challenges the administration's position, which seeks to carve out exceptions based on parental immigration status. In Ghosh's reading, such distinctions are precisely what the amendment was designed to eliminate.

The stakes in the case are immense. A ruling in favour of the administration could fundamentally alter the legal landscape for millions of children born in the US, including tens of thousands of children of Indian immigrants. It would also mark a significant departure from over a century of judicial and administrative practice.

In that contest, Smita Ghosh remains a central figure — an advocate whose influence is felt less through public advocacy than through the careful construction of legal arguments that may shape the court's reasoning. If her strategy succeeds, it will not be because of a single dramatic courtroom moment, but because of a sustained effort to demonstrate that birthright citizenship is not a modern invention or political preference, but a deeply rooted legal inheritance — one that, in her view, the constitution was designed to protect, not to limit.

## Beirut strike kills top Hezbollah commander: Outfit

Israel's military on Wednesday said it killed senior Hezbollah commander Haj Youssef Ismail Hashem in the biggest blow to the group since a fresh bout of fighting with Israel erupted early last month.

Israel's navy killed Hashem, the commander of Hezbollah's southern front, the country's military spokesperson Avichay Adraee said in a statement on X. Hezbollah later confirmed his death in a statement Wednesday, calling him a "beacon of the Islamic Resistance." His death is considered one of the biggest setbacks suffered by the group since the killing of chief of staff Haytham Ali Tabtabai in November 2025.

Hezbollah, which is backed by Iran, has lost most of its senior commanders following its last war with Israel that raged from Oct 2023 to Nov 2024. Hashem had inherited his position from Ali Karaki, killed alongside the group's former leader Hassan Nasrallah in an Israeli attack on Sept 2024.

"He is a tier-one commander and this is the harshest blow we have been subject to since the assassination of Tabtabai," a senior Hezbollah official said. REUTERS

# France to US: Nato serves Euro-Atlantic security, not Hormuz offensive missions

▶Continued from P1

Two security sources from Pakistan, which is mediating in the conflict, earlier told Reuters that Islamabad had proposed a temporary ceasefire to both sides but had not heard back from either.

US vice president J D Vance communicated with intermediaries from Pakistan about the Iran conflict as recently as Tuesday, a source briefed on the matter said. At Trump's direction, Vance signalled privately that Trump was open to a ceasefire as long as certain US demands were met, including reopening the Strait of Hormuz, the source said.

Trump had signalled on Tuesday he could wind down the war in two to three weeks even without a deal, and scaled up threats to pull the US out of the Nato defence alliance if European states did not help stop Iran threatening the waterway. In his remarks to Reuters on Wednesday, Trump said he would express his disgust with Nato for what he considers the alliance's lack of support for US objectives in Iran.

"I was never swayed by Nato. I always knew they were a paper tiger, and (Russian President) Putin knows that too, by the way," Trump told Britain's Daily Telegraph, saying he had moved "beyond reconsideration" of US membership.

European states took pains to appear unruffled and France's junior army minister Alice Rufo said operations by Nato in the Strait would be a breach of international law. He added that the military alliance was designed to ensure security in the Euro-Atlantic area and not to launch offensive operations in the Strait. AGENCIES

Reuters

A liquid representing a fossil fuel runs down a demonstrator's face during a 'Fossil Free London' protest in London on Wednesday

## Nepal doubles jet fuel prices

**Kathmandu:** Nepal more than doubled the price of aviation fuel from Tuesday midnight. Nepal Oil Corporation raised fuel price by 84.7% for international flights from Kathmandu, by 116.2% for jets operating from Pokhara and 117.4% from Bhairahawa, saying it needs to make payments to refiner Indian Oil Corporation for supplies. Jet fuel prices for domestic flights have been raised by 97.6%, Nepal's state-run agency that imports, stores and distributes petroleum products, said. This has resulted in a surge in domestic airfare of as much as 50%, according to Civil Aviation Authority of Nepal. REUTERS

## Indian injured in drone attack in UAE

**Dubai:** An Indian national was injured when he was hit by shrapnel from a drone intercepted by the air defence system in the UAE on Wednesday, local govt said. The incident occurred near the Umm Al Thuoob Industrial Area in Umm Al Qaiwain, one of the seven emirates, state-run WAM news agency reported. Earlier last week, five Indians were injured in the UAE after debris fell in the vicinity of the Khalifa Economic Zones Abu Dhabi. REUTERS

## Journo abducted from Iraq was warned: Officials

**Baghdad:** An American journalist who was kidnapped in Baghdad had tried to cross from Syria into Iraq three weeks earlier and was initially turned back for lacking a press work permit, an Iraqi official said Wednesday. US and Iraqi officials said Shelly Kittleson had also been warned of threats against her.

Hussein Alawi, an adviser to PM Mohammed Shia al-Sudani, said Kittleson later entered the country after obtaining a single-entry visa to Iraq valid for 60 days issued to allow foreign citizens stranded in neighbouring countries to "transit through Iraq" he said. Kittleson entered Baghdad a few days before she was kidnapped and was staying in a hotel in the capital, he said."

US officials have alleged that Kittleson was taken by Kataib Hezbollah, an Iran-linked Iraqi militia that has been implicated in previous abductions of foreigners. The group has not claimed responsibility and Iraq govt has not said anything about the suspects' affiliation. AP

## Pak and Af Taliban officials discuss ceasefire in China

**Islamabad:** Pakistan and Afghanistan held the first round of peace talks on Wednesday, with China mediating to broker a durable ceasefire after weeks of fighting, two Pakistani officials said. But even as the talks were held, Afghanistan accused Pakistan of firing mortars into its territory.

Representatives from the two countries were meeting in Urumqi, in northern China, the officials said, speaking on condition of anonymity. The first round of talks concluded on Wednesday and were expected to continue on Thursday, they said. China has not commented. Pakistan's ministry of foreign affairs neither confirmed nor denied the talks were taking place. Afghanistan confirmed the discussions took place.

Farid Dehqan, a police spokesman for the Afghan province of Kunar, said Pakistan had fired mortars late on Wednesday, killing two civilians. He said the shelling was ongoing two hours after it started. AP

## DAILY PLANET

### Passengers stuck in traffic after robotaxi outage in China's Wuhan

Some robotaxi passengers were left stranded in the middle of fast-moving traffic in a major Chinese city after their driverless vehicles stopped running, according to police and media reports on Wednesday. A preliminary investigation indicates more than 100 robotaxis came to a halt because of a "system malfunction," police in the city of Wuhan said in a statement, without elaborating. No injuries were reported. One passenger told Chinese media that their robotaxi stopped after turning a corner. An instruction on a screen read: "Driving system malfunction. Staff are expected to arrive in 5 minutes." It is the first time a mass shutdown of robotaxis has been reported in China. In Dec, many of Waymo's self-driving cars came to a stop in San Francisco because of a power outage. The taxis in Wuhan are operated by Baidu. Baidu did not have any immediate comment.

### Hiker's dog lost in NZ rescued by helicopter after strangers fund search

When a hiker fell from a 180-foot waterfall in wild New Zealand bush, rescuers were forced to evacuate the badly hurt woman without her dog, which couldn't be found. After strangers raised thousands of dollars for a search, border collie Molly was flown to safety by a helicopter pilot who was determined to reunite pet and owner. A week earlier, an emergency rescue helicopter found the woman with bruises and lacerations after a fall at a rocky spot at the waterfall on the South Island's West Coast. She was airlifted on March 24 but they were forced to leave without her pet. Molly was bedraggled and hungry when she was found Tuesday, just a few meters from the spot where the hiker had been lucky to survive. Strangers had pledged more than 11,000 New Zealand dollars ($6,300) for a search.

# China, Bhutan push forward border alignment discussions

**Beijing:** China and Bhutan on Wednesday discussed boundary alignment in areas "where there are no disputes" as the two sides held the 15th expert group meeting on their boundary issues. At the expert group meeting held here, the two sides affirmed the progress made in the China-Bhutan boundary negotiations in recent years, a joint press release issued by both sides after the talks said. They had frank and constructive discussions in a friendly atmosphere on the way forward, it said.

The third meeting of the Joint Technical Team on Delimitation and Demarcation of the China-Bhutan Boundary, held on the sidelines of the expert group meeting, discussed boundary alignment in undisputed areas.

China and Bhutan do not have diplomatic relations, but maintain contact through visits by officials. While Beijing resolved the boundary disputes with 12 neighbours, India and Bhutan are the only two countries with which China has yet to resolve the border disputes. The two countries have agreed to expedite negotiations to settle their border dispute through a three-step roadmap. Bhutan shares a 477km-long border with China, and the two countries held 25 rounds of talks. PTI

# Desi appears in UK court for mowing down pedestrians

Naomi Canton

**London:** An Indian man, believed to be from Kerala, has been charged with driving a car into pedestrians in Derby on Saturday night, leaving seven people seriously injured.

Sandhu Ponnachan (36), who moved to Derby in April 2025 and is an Indian citizen, appeared at Southern Derbyshire magistrates' court on Wednesday where he was charged with six counts of grievous bodily harm (GBH) with intent, one count of attempted GBH with intent, one count of dangerous driving and one count of possession of a bladed article. He spoke only to confirm his name and address and did not enter a plea. He was remanded in custody to appear at Derby crown court on April 29. There was no application for bail.

Four men and three women, aged 36 to 52, had to be hospitalised after a black car mounted the pavement and ploughed into pedestrians at 9.30pm on March 28. Four people have since been discharged. His LinkedIn profile shows he was looking for work as a logistics manager, having worked in this role for Caterpillar Inc. He was qualified to operate a forklift and work as a security guard. He is also listed as a director of Greeshmam Ltd.

"COOPER'S ONLY 20 SOMETHING BUT HAS A HUNGER. THE WAY HE PERFORMED IN HIS FIRST MATCH, BATTING AT NO. 3, PLAYING A MATCH-WINNING INNINGS, SHOWS HOW MATURE HE IS. THE WAY HE IS BATTING, I THINK HE WILL BE ONE OF THE FINDS OF THIS SEASON."
—Yuzvendra Chahal | PBKS leg-spinner

# LOW IN SCORES, HIGH IN THRILL

## Rizvi, Stubbs Seal Exciting Win For Delhi Capitals Over Super Giants

**Fazal Khan** | TNN

**Lucknow:** The much reputed batting of Lucknow Super Giants managed a meagre 141 after being asked to bat first, and at the break it seemed a lost cause for the home side. Some excellent pace bowling spearheaded by Mohammed Shami briefly raised hopes of a fightback, but talented Sameer Rizvi's brilliant knock helped Delhi Capitals script a hard-earned six-wicket win in the opening IPL match at the Ekana Stadium on Wednesday. It was the first time this season that a team had lost at home.

Chasing 142, Delhi Capitals were in deep trouble at 26/4 in 4.3 overs as Shami and Prince Yadav ripped through the top order. But Rizvi rose to the occasion with a superb unbeaten 70 and stitched a match-winning 119-run partnership with Tristan Stubbs (39) to take DC home with 17 balls to spare. Rizvi, who hails from Uttar Pradesh, proved to be the thorn for Lucknow and their hopes of making a winning start, leaving the home crowd disappointed.

Delhi's innings began disastrously. Shami struck on the very first ball, dismissing DC opener KL Rahul for a golden duck as he sliced a wide delivery to deep third man. Prince Yadav then struck what at that time felt like decisive blows in the fifth over, removing Pathum Nissanka (1) and Axar Patel off successive balls to leave DC reeling. However, Rizvi and Stubbs steadied the chase with remarkable composure, counterattacking smartly to wrest control from the hosts.

Earlier, Lucknow Super Giants' decision to promote captain Rishabh Pant to open alongside Mitchell Marsh did not yield the expected result. Pant looked unsettled and was run out for seven in the third over after a deflection off Mukesh Kumar's fingertips hit the stumps at the non-striker's end.

Delhi's bowlers kept things tight throughout the powerplay, restricting Lucknow to 42/2 in six overs. Axar Patel then cleaned up Aiden Markram (11), while T Natarajan dismissed Ayush Badoni for a duck. Lucknow had slipped to 49 for 3 and were in a spot of bother.

Marsh (35) offered some resistance with three sixes, but Kuldeep Yadav dismissed him for the fourth time in six encounters, leaving LSG at 71/5. Mukul Choudhary (14) and Abdul Samad tried to rebuild with a 34-run stand, while Shahbaz Ahmed (15) added late runs, but Natarajan and Kuldeep ensured Lucknow were bundled out for 141.

In the end, Rizvi's calmness under pressure and his decisive partnership with Stubbs proved to be the difference in a match that had many twists and turns.

Pics: Sunil Kumar

COMPOSED KNOCK: Sameer Rizvi's unbeaten innings of 70 is his highest score in the IPL

ON THE MONEY: DC pacer Lungi Ngidi (left) finished with figures of 3/27 against LSG

**5** DC have won five successive IPL matches against LSG between 2024 and 2026. They had lost the first three games.

**119** Rizvi and Stubbs's unbeaten partnership for the fifth wicket is the first century stand involving DC and LSG in the IPL.

**3/27** Lungi Ngidi, on his debut for DC, has produced his second best figures in the IPL. His best figures of 4/10 came for CSK against KXIP at Pune on May 20, 2018.

### SCOREBOARD

**LSG:** Mitchell Marsh c Stubbs b Kuldeep 35, Rishabh Pant run out 7, Aiden Markram b Patel 11, Ayush Badoni c Rahul b Natarajan 0, Nicholas Pooran b Ngidi 8, Abdul Samad c Miller b Natarajan 36, Mukul Choudhary c&b Kuldeep 14, Shahbaz Ahmed not out 15, Mohammed Shami c Kuldeep b Natarajan 1, Anrich Nortje c Stubbs b Ngidi 0, Mohsin Khan c Mukesh b Ngidi 0
**Extras:** (B4, LB8, W2) **14**; **Total:** (all out in 18.4 overs) 141;**FoW:** 1-19, 2-48, 3-49, 4-65, 5-71, 6-105, 7-138, 8-140, 9-141;
**Bowling:** Mukesh Kumar 3-0-17-0, Lungi Ngidi 3.4-0-27-3, Axar Patel 3-0-17-1, T Natarajan 4-0-29-3, Kuldeep Yadav 4-0-31-2, Vipraj Nigam 1-0-8-0
**DC:** KL Rahul c Mohsin b Shami 0, Pathum Nissanka c †Pant b Yadav 1, Nitish Rana c Samad b Mohsin 15, Sameer Rizvi not out 70, Axar Patel b Yadav 0, Tristan Stubbs not out 39
**Extras:** (LB4, W16) **20**; **Total:** (four wickets, in 17.1 overs) **145**; **FoW:** 1-0, 2-21, 3-25, 4-26;
**Bowling:** Mohammed Shami 4-0-28-1, Prince Yadav 3-0-20-2, Mohsin Khan 4-1-19-1, Anrich Nortje 4-0-39-0, Shahbaz Ahmed 1-0-16-0, Aiden Markram 1-0-13-0, Abdul Samad 0.1-0-6-0
**Result:** DC won by six wickets

# Spotlight on bowlers as KKR host SRH

**Archiman.Bhaduri**
@timesofindia.com

**Kolkata:** What can be considered a safe total? That question would be haunting the Kolkata Knight Riders and Sunrisers Hyderabad ahead of their clash at the Eden Gardens on Thursday.

They would have been happy putting up more than 200 runs in their opening games of the season, but despite that they ended up as the losing sides. It's hard to digest, but harder to find a way out.

Both teams are struggling to get a Plan B in place after losing some key players even before the first ball was bowled in this IPL. Interestingly, it's their bowling that has taken the worst hit, which made KKR coach Abhishek Nayar and his SRH counterpart Daniel Vettori's jobs more difficult in getting the right team combination. All the six bowlers used by the sides in their opening match were taken to the cleaners by the rival batters.

KKR have always banked on their spinners and in the absence of their key pacers Harshit Rana and Matheesha Pathirana, who is yet to join the side, the role of Varun Chakaravarthy and Sunil Narine turned out to be more crucial.

Missing Cameron Green the bowler definitely deprived the side of an option, but KKR's spin duo going for 78 runs in their combined seven overs against Mumbai Indians should be a bigger concern for them. Chakaravarthy looked low on confidence as his poor run from T20 World Cup Super Eights continued and Narine too failed to put the brakes.

It was poor captaincy on the part of Ajinkya Rahane for not bowling Narine, who was KKR's most economical bowler of the night, against Rohit Sharma, against whom he enjoys a good record. On the other hand Royal Challengers Bengaluru getting 203 runs in just over 15 overs speaks poorly of SRH's bowlers.

KKR's middle order was an area of concern last season and the same problem returned to trouble them. KKR got off to a decent 78/1 in the Powerplay against MI. But it was in the middle overs that they lost the momentum getting just 19 runs in three (12-14) overs. Rinku Singh and Ramandeep Singh failed to fill the void left behind by Andre Russell in the lower order.

SRH are missing their regular skipper Pat Cummins and like last season, they continued to give away runs in the Powerplay conceding 76 against RCB.

Expect a few changes as both camps will look to rectify things while KKR will hope for a great home run in their next three games.

**WEATHER**
28°C

**NUMBERS GAME**

**3** Three hundreds have been recorded for SRH vs KKR in the IPL — 126 by David Warner at Hyderabad on April 30, 2017; 100* by Harry Brook at Eden Gardens, Kolkata on April 14, 2023 and 105* off 39 balls by Heinrich Klaasen at Delhi on May 25, 2025.

**6.80** Economy rate by Sunil Narine while claiming 193 wickets at 25.65 runs apiece in 190 matches — the best among bowlers with 150 wickets or more in the IPL.

Stats: Rajesh Kumar

## 160-170 TOTALS PRODUCE EXCITING GAMES: PARTHIV

**Hindol.Basu**@timesofindia.com

**New Chandigarh:** It wasn't a 200-plus slugfest that fans nowadays associate with the IPL. But what unfolded in New Chandigarh on Tuesday evening was Punjab Kings sneaking home by three wickets in the final over against Gujarat Titans.

**Parthiv Patel**, GT's assistant coach, wasn't complaining. "Obviously, there was a contest here between the bat and the ball. These 160-170 totals produce exciting, edge-of-the-seat games. There is a contest," Patel said.

In an era where scores of 200-plus have become increasingly common, Patel stressed that conditions remain the biggest factor in shaping the nature of a T20 game. "Conditions make a big difference whether it is going to be a balanced contest-oriented games, said Patel.

As for Gujarat, the loss stings. But Patel's pragmatism cuts through cleanly — the discussion around ideal scores is secondary to results. Whether it's a high-scoring shootout or a tense chase of a modest total, the end goal remains unchanged. "Whichever match gives us two points, we would prefer that. It doesn't matter whether it's a 200-plus game or a 140 chasing-down game," he said.

**Iyer fined ₹12 lakh for slow over-rate:** Punjab Kings captain Shreyas Iyer was fined Rs 12 lakh after his team maintained a slow over-rate against Gujarat Titans. PTI

# 'Calm' Connolly announces himself

**Hindol.Basu**@timesofindia.com

**New Chandigarh:** He woke up in the morning with nerves on Tuesday. "Which I was really happy about," Cooper Connolly said after leading Punjab Kings to a three-wicket win over Gujarat Titans.

For Connolly, it wasn't the nerves, but the "happiness" about having them. That small detail captures something essential about this 22-year-old from Perth. He doesn't run from pressure. And on Tuesday night in New Chandigarh, he walked out to bat like a man arriving exactly where he was always meant to be.

By the time he was done, Connolly had scored an unbeaten 72 off 44, guided Punjab to their first win of IPL-2026, taking Player of the Match honours on IPL debut, and left his new teammate Yuzvendra Chahal making declarations on his behalf.

"He's only 20 something but has the hunger to excel on the big stage," Chahal said in the post-match presser. "The way he performed in his very first match, batting at No. 3, playing a match-winning innings, shows how mature he is mentally."

Awareness is a word that comes up often around Connolly. It is there in how he builds an innings and in how he resists the urge to overhit. He describes himself as: "I'm just more of a tempo player, try to feel the flow of my hands, I don't hit too many big sixes, it's more about timing."

Punjab skipper Shreyas Iyer offered something more considered than ordinary praise. "I've seen him in the past as well, playing for Australia. He's got a great mindset and hopefully he continues with the same form," Iyer said.

Connolly has modelled himself after Shaun Marsh, the former Australian left-handed opening batsman who too came from Western Australia like Connolly. There is also something poetic that Connolly now plays for the very franchise Marsh once represented. "Shaun Marsh played for the Punjab Kings, and I grew up watching him. It's sort of an honour to play for the same franchise as him," Connolly said.

Connolly also credited Punjab head coach Ricky Ponting for easing the pressure on him. "Ricky Ponting just kept me calm and collected," Connolly said. "He told me to play my game, go out there and dominate. It was a nice team performance. We were very strong with the ball and made things easier for ourselves."

DEBUT DASH: With his unbeaten knock of 72, Cooper Connolly became the 25th player to score a fifty on his IPL debut

Connolly traces his journey through the WACA's (Western Australia Cricket Association) development pipeline. He is part of a generation that came of age in the Big Bash League's glare, while still respecting the grind of Sheffield Shield cricket. He also captained Australia at the 2022 ICC Under-19 World Cup.

His big-match temperament was first seen in the 2022-23 BBL final, where he hit an unbeaten 25 off 11 balls in just his second T20 innings to lift Perth Scorchers to the title. His first-class debut arrived in the 2023-24 Sheffield Shield final against Tasmania, where he scored 90 in the first innings as Western Australia won the title. First big-format match, high pressure game and a game-changing knock. There is a pattern here, and it is not coincidental. "I actually don't mind a bit of pressure. I feel like that suits the sort of style of person I am," Connolly stated.

# KKR see Green as a long-term prospect

**Archiman.Bhaduri**
@timesofindia.com

**Kolkata:** There was much talk about Kolkata Knight Riders missing **Cameron Green** the bowler after going down to Mumbai Indians even after scoring more than 200 runs.

Green, who came on board as the highest paid player in the auction, fetching Rs 25.20 crore, was barred from bowling by Cricket Australia since the allrounder returned after a back injury. However, KKR head coach Abhishek Nayar was not disheartened as he said Green was picked as a long-term prospect.

"I think the idea of picking a player in an auction is not always very short-sighted. There is obviously a horizon. You look at what a player has done over a number of years and the skill set he possesses," he stated on Wednesday.

"When we went into the auction we thought if Russ (Andre Russell) wasn't there, then who is the next best all-rounder? And we felt Green could do that for us," he added.

However, things changed in the gap between the auction and the tournament started. "Whatever decision you make, you don't know what the future will hold," Nayar said, trying to accept the reality.

The coach is also hopeful of Varun Chakravarthy bouncing back after going for runs against Mumbai Indians.

## Four-Time World Cup Champions Miss Flight For Third Straight Time, Bosnia Advance

# ITALY LOSE SUMMER JOB

AP

Italy's Gianluigi Donnarumma after his team's loss in a penalty shootout in the playoff final against Bosnia in Zenica, Bosnia

The last entrants
Bosnia and Herzegovina, Sweden, Turkey, Czech Republic, Congo, Iraq

**Rome:** Italians will once again be forced to watch a World Cup from the sidelines after another play-off disaster that highlighted just how far one of the great footballing nations has fallen.

Four-time world champions, the football-mad country finds itself at its lowest ebb after missing out again through the play-offs, this time **following a penalty shoot-out defeat to Bosnia and Herzegovina**.

Gennaro Gattuso knew he had a tough job when he was appointed in June, asked to replace Luciano Spalletti and take Italy to the World Cup with automatic qualification looking near-impossible after a 3-0 hammering at the hands of Erling Haaland's Norway.

One of the heroes of Italy's 2006 World Cup triumph, Gattuso remained vague on his future as coach even as Gabriele Gravina, the head of Italy's football federation (FIGC), asked him to stay beyond the end of his current contract which expires this summer.

Italy did not perform all that badly under him, with six wins from eight matches and 22 goals scored. He has created a strong team spirit which was lacking under Spalletti, but another defeat to Norway in Nov, 4-1 at the San Siro of all places, laid bare the limits of a team sorely missing the star power of years gone by.

The 20th anniversary of Italy's last World Cup win falls on July 9, during this summer's finals in the United States, Canada and Mexico.

But, if anything, that dramatic win on penalties over France feels even further away than that. With an empty summer, even Italy's victory at Euro 2020 has been devalued as the country fails to produce world class talent and its clubs, once the European elite, slip further behind. Italy, whose European title defence ended at the last 16 in 2024 with a footballing lesson by Switzerland, have not played a knockout match at a World Cup since 2006: for context, the iPhone was introduced to the market one year later.

> **Today's results are the consequence of our attitude from 20 years ago, when we clung onto our best players like Cannavaro and Totti, thinking they would last forever. Right then we should have been rethinking our tactical and technical models."**
> —Gigi Buffon
> GOALKEEPER OF THE 2006 WORLD CUP-WINNING TEAM

Just 33 percent of Serie A players are eligible for national team selection. That number is higher than the 29.2 percent of English players in the EPL, Germany (41.5 percent) and France (37.5 percent) both have a higher proportion in top division squads.

Meanwhile, Bosnia captain Edin Dzeko could only clutch an ice pack and watch as his teammates secured World Cup qualification, the 40-year-old declaring it must have been fate. The game in Zenica ended 1-1 after extra-time, and Dzeko hit the deck in the dying seconds after a foul by Davide Frattesi. "I keep saying it must have been fate, for it to happen in the last second of the match, and then for me not to be able to take a penalty," Dzeko said. AFP

### AZZURRI'S CUP CURSE

**Italy won't get a chance at redemption for Roberto Baggio's miss in the 1994 World Cup final at the Rose Bowl. Here's a look at four reasons why the Azzurri continue to struggle...**

**Players lack calibre**
Compared to the title-winning 2006 Italy squad that featured standouts like Alessandro Del Piero, Francesco Totti and Andrea Pirlo, there haven't been Italian players of that caliber for years. The most expensive player on the current squad is midfielder Sandro Tonali, who was purchased by Newcastle in 2023 for about 80m euros. The only other world-class player is Man City goalkeeper Gianluigi Donnarumma. Starting strikers are Argentine-born Mateo Retegui and Moise Kean of Fiorentina.

**Declining domestic league**
The Italian league was considered the best in the 1980s and 1990s when the likes of Diego Maradona, Marco van Basten and Ruud Gullit came to play in the prime of their careers. These days, ageing standouts like 40-year-old Luka Modric (at Milan) and 39-year-old Jamie Vardy (Cremonese) come to Serie A.

**Tennis usurping attention**
Inspired by Jannik Sinner's accomplishments, tennis is encroaching on football's status as Italy's most popular sport. Italy is also finding success in Formula 1 with 19-year-old Kimi Antonelli. Italy qualified for cricket's T20 WC.

**Infrastructure woes**
Of Italy's major clubs, only Juventus currently owns and operates a modern stadium. The lack of club-owned stadiums means that teams can't earn enough to compete with wealthy rivals from abroad — which weighs down Serie A and affects the national team.

## Yamal angered by anti-Muslim chants at home

**Madrid:** Spain star Lamine Yamal on Wednesday condemned the anti-Muslim chants made by Spanish fans during the 0-0 draw in the friendly against Egypt in Barcelona. The Spanish government and the federation also condemned the chants.

Yamal, who is Muslim, said the chants made by part of the fans at RCDE Stadium were disrespectful and intolerable. "I understand that not all fans are like that, but to those who chant these things, using a religion as a taunt on the field makes you look ignorant and racist," he wrote on Instagram. "Football is not for disrespecting people for who they are or what they believe. I feel total and absolute repulsion towards any xenophobic or racist attitudes," said Spain coach Luis de la Fuente. "They are intolerable."

**Messi's last home show?**
**Buenos Aires:** In what was likely his final home appearance for national squad, Lionel Messi scored a goal in a 5-0 rout of Zambia. Argentina, who also won the World Cup in 1978 and 1986, will open against Algeria on June 16 in Group J, followed by games against Austria on June 22 and Jordan on June 27. AGENCIES

Reuters

Congo fan Michel Mboladinga, dressed as Patrice Lumumba

**52** Years since Congo qualified for the WC. The African nation battered by conflict in their mineral-rich eastern region, was called Zaire then.

# 'Let's shock the world': Iraq cast aside war disruption

Reuters

Iraq's Marko Farji celebrates in Monterrey

**Monterrey/Baghdad:** Music, fireworks and the occasional round of gunfire erupted across Iraq's capital Baghdad early Wednesday after the national team qualified for the World Cup for the first time in decades. The "Lions of Mesopotamia" secured the country's first World Cup appearance since Mexico 1986 with a 2-1 win over Bolivia.

Coach Graham Arnold challenged his players to "shock the world" after Iraq became the 48th and final team to qualify for the World Cup.

"With everything going on in West Asia it made it harder for the players," said the Australian Arnold, who had initially sought to have the fixture postponed. "Hopefully it will help change the perception of Iraq and the football in Iraq. Let's shock the world.

"I banned social media since we got here," he added. "I did not want them to think of what is going on in the Middle East." The Iraqi team arrived in Mexico after a gruelling three-day journey.

The 62-year-old Arnold, who took Australia to the last 16 of the Qatar World Cup in 2022, said: "We have two months to get fit. For us to do something at this World Cup would be a miracle."

Oscar Villegas, the Bolivia coach, was visibly distraught.

"Devastated, totally devastated because we believed we could be at the World Cup," he said. AFP

# Brooksby on tennis & life on the spectrum

## The American's Game Is Unorthodox, His Court Coverage Razor Sharp And Like His Approach To Life, It's Shaped By Seeing the World Differently

Prajwal.Hegde@timesofindia.com

At 6 ft 4' Jenson Brooksby's frame is imposing, yet there's a quiet agility in the way he carries himself, a reflection of the unorthodox style that defines both his tennis and his life. His groundstrokes, struck off a short backswing, rely on timing and redirection, his service motion can appear halting, but his court coverage is unusually nimble for someone his size.

On the sidelines of the Dubai Duty Free Tennis Championships in Feb, the 25-year-old spoke openly about his approach, sparking the same energy while engaging in conversation as he does in rallies. That willingness to engage, he admits, hasn't always come easy. Brooksby, ranked 41, has had to navigate a world that didn't always feel intuitive, learning to connect with others. On court, he steps into matches ready to make them physical, off it he tends to retreat into his own quiet space. On World Autism Awareness Day, stories often focus on challenges, overlooking autism as a neurodevelopmental difference that shapes communication. Brooksby's journey has been one of learning to find ease with something that once lay firmly outside his comfort zone – social connection.

"A lot of the years growing up, I felt myself being more secluded. It was hard for me to socialise, especially during my school years," Brooksby said in an exclusive chat with TOI. "Now it's pretty normal, I'll talk with players when I'm at tournaments, and I have good relations with my team, but maybe there's still a part of me that likes to be by myself more often than the average person does."

Getty Images

Jenson Brooksby

Brooksby, who announced himself at the US Open five years ago, began 2021 ranked outside the top 300, starting the year at an ITF Futures event in Villena, Spain. In New York, he stunned Taylor Fritz, then world No. 42, and backed it up with a win over 25th seed Aslan Karatsev to reach the fourth round, where he fell to Novak Djokovic in four sets. The following year Brooksby surged to a career-high ranking of No. 33.

He then missed most of 2023 and all of 2024 for a combination of reasons: a ban for missing three out-of-competition drug tests within a 12-month period, a violation that can be sanctioned without a positive result, and injury woes, including surgeries on both wrists. Late last year, deep into his comeback, he shared for the first time that he was diagnosed on the severe end of the autism spectrum as a child. Brooksby was nonverbal until the age of four and underwent intensive Applied Behaviour Analysis therapy, totalling 40 hours per week.

> Once I found out I felt I needed to learn, adapt and do things differently in a way that worked for him
> **Amrit Narasimhan** | BROOKSBY'S AGENT

"My parents did not hide my diagnosis from me," said Brooksby, the only child of Glen, an anaesthesiologist, and Tania. "A majority of what I heard about the disorder growing up was through conversations I would hear between my parents and experts, which would make me think about it more." The first person Brooksby spoke to about his condition was his agent, Amrit Narasimhan, a former pro from Bengaluru.

"That was a big step, I was sharing something I never really felt comfortable sharing," he said of telling Narasimhan over dinner on his birthday in 2023. "I saw how he responded to it, he took it normally. I did wonder before telling him if he'd treat me differently, but no, that didn't happen and that gave me so much confidence. I was then able to share it with the rest of my team." Narasimhan, who has known Brooksby from his teenage days, heard the American.

"I always knew there were challenges, but didn't know the why," he said. "Once I found out I felt I needed to learn, adapt and do things differently in a way that worked for him."

Brooksby, among the first sportspersons to open up about this lifelong condition, describes it as one with both challenges and strengths. He emphasizes his ability to focus deeply, noting that he thrives on repetition, discipline, and a structured, routine-driven approach.

"Regardless of who I'm playing, I feel good about how I'm supposed to play. I'm able to focus on those few things and do it for a long period of time," the 25-year-old said. "But if I'm playing someone who has more (variety), I struggle to switch things around quickly. I think everyone has some level of struggle with that, but it is a little bit higher for me."

On practice weeks, Brooksby keeps a steady schedule, waking up around eight, beginning with a lengthy gym session, then heading to the court for an hour or two. Tournament weeks are less predictable, shaped by match timings and recovery.

He is easy about evenings, dinner at home with his own company or a night out, going solo or with pals. During tournaments, things are more low-key, meals with his team or alone. Once competition begins, the focus narrows and the routine quietens.

That balance, between structure and flexibility, solitude and connection, mirrors Brooksby's broader journey as he learns to move through the world on his own terms, finding comfort within it.

## SNAP SHOTS

### INDIA TO TOUR ZIM IN JULY

India will head to Zimbabwe for a three-match T20I series in July for their first assignment since clinching their World Cup title this year. The BCCI informed in a statement on Wednesday that the Indian men's team will play three games against the hosts at the Harare Sports Club on July 23, 25 and 26 respectively. This will be the first of the two bilateral series slated for the 2026-27 season between India and Zimbabwe, who are slated to travel for a three-match ODI series to be played on Jan 3, 6 and 9.

**Kerr powers NZ to record chase:** New Zealand registered the highest successful run chase in women's ODI history on Wednesday, beating South Africa by two wickets on the back of an outstanding unbeaten 179 from captain Amelia Kerr. Chasing 347, Kerr hit a six and 23 fours from 139 balls as her team surpassed India's feat of overhauling Australia's total of 338 at last year's World Cup. It was the second-highest score of Kerr's ODI career, behind her 232 not out against Ireland in 2018.

**Talawar, Nagini clinch gold:** Race walker Dasharath Talawar and middle-distance runner Nagini added a gold medal each to table toppers Karnataka's tally while Chhattisgarh's Gajendra Thakur bagged a silver in the men's 800m on Day 8 of the Khelo India Tribal Games in Raipur on Wednesday. Dasharath led Karnataka's 1-2 in the men's 10km race walk with a time of 45:13.85s with Darshan Bagadi (46:25.90s) finishing second. Nagini won the women's 800m race in 2:13.8s to take Karnataka's medal tally to 21 gold, eight silver and seven bronze.

**Vishvanath, Sachin advance:** Indian boxers continued their impressive run on day three of the Asian Boxing Championships, with World Cup medallist Sachin Siwach and Vishvanath Suresh advancing to the quarterfinals in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia, on Wednesday. Sachin notched a hard-fought 4-1 split decision win over Mongolia's Buyandalai Bayarkhuu in the 60kg round of 16 bout. Vishvanath moved into the quarterfinals with a commanding 5-0 unanimous decision over Bekzat Ergeshov of Kyrgyzstan.

**Top athletes for B'luru meet:** Asian Games silver medallist M Sreeshankar will lead an array of India's top athletes who will compete in the first leg of the Indian Athletics Series to be held at the Sree Kanteerava Stadium in Bengaluru on April 4. Others who are expected to enter the fray include Tamil Arasu (men's 100m), Mohammed Afsal P (men's 800m), Vithya Ramraj (women's 400mH), Shaili Singh (women's long jump), Ancy Sojan (women's long jump) and Baranica Elangovan (women's pole vault), the Karnataka Athletics Association said in a press release.

# 'THE THING WITH PLANS IS THEY NEVER UNFOLD PERFECTLY'

sports guest editors

## That's Kane Williamson's take on modern T20, while Tom Moody, TOI's joint Sports Guest Editor, feels 'a blanket approach is as reckless as a reckless approach'

Partha.Bhaduri@timesofindia.com

**Lucknow:** They say a good coach changes a game, while a great coach changes lives. So when Tom Moody, former Australian cricketer turned super coach, and New Zealand batting great Kane Williamson, both associated with the Lucknow Super Giants, agree to sit down together and talk cricket, it's not only a perfect peek into the world of modern T20 strategising but a masterclass in coaching philosophy. Both were here in Lucknow as Times Sport Guest Editors. Both seemed delighted to share their ideas. We simply sat in rapt attention as they spoke.

*Excerpts from the conversation...*

Sunil Kumar

**KEEN OBSERVERS:** LSG's strategic advisor Kane Williamson (left) and global director of cricket Tom Moody during an interaction with **TOI** in Lucknow

**KANE WILLIAMSON BATTING NUMBERS**

| | M | Runs | HS | Ave | 100 | 50 | SR |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Tests | 108 | 9461 | 251 | 54.68 | 33 | 38 | 51.98 |
| ODIs | 175 | 7256 | 148 | 48.69 | 15 | 47 | 81.59 |
| T20Is | 93 | 2575 | 95 | 33.44 | 0 | 18 | 123.08 |
| IPL | 79 | 2128 | 89 | 35.46 | 0 | 18 | 125.61 |

**TOM MOODY AS COACH IN IPL**

| Team | Seasons | M | Won | Lost | Winning % |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| KXIP | 2008-10 | 43 | 21 | 22 | 48.84 |
| SRH | 2013-19 | 108 | 58 | 50 | 53.70 |

—Stats: Rajesh Kumar

**In franchise coaching, where you have a two-month window, how do you go about shaping a broader vision for the unit?**

**Moody (global director of cricket, LSG):** It's realistically a three-year window after a mega auction. We have a philosophy where we're wanting to make sure we're caring for players beyond the two months, whether that is physical or mental skill development, nutrition, strength or conditioning.

**So you give them homework?**

**Moody:** No. We give them opportunities to develop. Some players embrace it. Some take their time. Most cricketers are brought up focusing purely on the special development of one skill, whether it is playing the cover drive better or bowling the outswinger better. There's more components to the game and we look to develop those. So now the outswing bowler has an inswinger, slower ball, bouncer, yorker. Plus you've got a good understanding of your best strength and conditioning program, how to look after yourself from a dietary perspective. There's many things that make an elite athlete. Skills are a small part.

**Kane, you recently retired from T20s. How has the transition been? Do great batters necessarily make good coaches?**

**Williamson (strategic advisor, LSG):** I don't think they always do but I'm excited at the opportunity. I still get the opportunity to be a part of the IPL. Players are here for a prime two-month window but how do you get your players to perform on that big stage? That's why the big view needs to be taken. It's great to be able to sort of pick up on some of the experiences of Tom and Justin (Langer, LSG head coach) and Arun (Bharat, LSG bowling coach).

**Are we seeing the death of all-format players because of the very specific demands of T20?**

**Williamson:** The natural diet of T20 now takes up so much of the calendar that players aren't getting exposed to all the different formats as often. It's becoming more challenging. When we first started, you would go on two-month tours and play all formats. I'm grateful that growing up, Test cricket was absolutely the pinnacle. You cut your teeth in that and that set the foundation of your game. Just the volume of batting or bowling that you get, overs and runs under the belt, exposure to different situations, it sets you up for anything.

That's where some of my strengths lie. Guys like myself or Virat (Kohli) have games that aren't just based on power, so we're always looking for different ways to try and evolve our games and be of benefit to the team.

You're seeing a lot more power-game now, certainly in the IPL where you've got 'Impact Players'. But if you look at someone like Virat, he is still on top of his T20 game. That's because he's so experienced and great at problem solving. So, you might see less all-format players, but who knows? You don't even know whether there'll still be some reasonable window (in the future) to keep red-ball cricket a priority!

**Moody:** It's dangerous to pigeonhole players in formats. I 100% agree with Kane with regards to the value of Test cricket or four-day cricket, like the Ranji Trophy. The foundation of your game is paramount and the longer format enables you to build that. And when you go to the pointy end of franchise cricket, and IPL is right at that pointy end, you're facing the best in the world. If you don't have a strong foundation, you're already half a step behind.

On top of that, you need to build other skills, which the likes of Kohli and Kane and Steve Smith and Joe Root have done. One thing that has become very, very obvious over time is that those types of skilled players still add incredible value to your T20 setup, but you don't have many of them. You need to build a team around them because they enable others to switch gears quickly if the game requires. You need to have the tools in your bag to be able to set the stage if there's a certain player that can take a bowler down for 20-plus (in an over). That's where players we're talking about are still valuable, because they'll recognise those moments and create the window of opportunity for the power hitter to do his thing.

**Is there a place for selective explosion rather than the sort of sustained explosion T20 teams now chase?**

**Moody:** There's a fine line. A blanket approach is as reckless as a reckless approach. An approach that aligns with how you feel you're going to win games against an opposition in the given set of conditions is always a moving target. The way we may stack up for our first game may be very different to our second game in Hyderabad.

Hyderabad has in recent times been a high-scoring ground where you can play the brand of cricket that Sunrises play. But you can't play that brand of cricket at other venues. We need to be smart enough and nimble enough to be able to pivot in certain phases. And experience is invaluable when it comes to doing that. That's where good captains, good coaching and collective awareness come into play.

**Is there a simple correlation to India's rise as T20 power and decline as a Test side?**

**Moody:** No. They've got the personnel and just haven't played well. They've come across teams like New Zealand that have planned very well. Sometimes when you've got so many options, you tend to create a little bit of instability within an environment. What is my role? Do I fit in here? One series you're in, next series you're not. In one series you've got an attack led by Bumrah. Next series, no Bumrah. Those types of things can be destructive to any format.

**Have T20s affected the defensive mindset of batters? Does that explain India's recent struggles against spin?**

**Williamson:** It's more of a case of understanding your game. The nature of T20 cricket demands changes and adjustments. If you're playing a lot of it, then it does change a batsman's 'shape' a little bit. That's part of the earlier conversation around perhaps multi-format players getting exposure more consistently, so they're able to go back into their red-ball bag and pull out the slight adjustments with their defensive positions which they may have shelved for T20s. So when the time comes to make those adjustments, they know what those adjustments are.

Young players now are playing 80% white-ball cricket, where the challenges are different. You're a product of your environment. It's a good point. It's worth putting time into really getting an understanding of what's important to your game — in the different formats — so you can make those quick adjustments.

**Is T20 too rigid about its match-ups and strategising? Is there still a place for fluid, dynamic on-field leadership?**

**Williamson:** You need to have done your homework. The game is so fast now, you're under a lot of time pressure. With over-rates, you don't want to get caught in that space. So you want to be reasonably well-planned. But the thing with plans is they never unfold perfectly. So there's total scope for being instinctive on the field and getting a read if the conditions change. But that's something you can fall back on only if you need it. In the other formats, there's a lot more time and there's a lot more spots where the game sits still. The IPL isn't like that. Without the 'Impact Player' there was more strategy in different directions you could go in. It's high-octane now so there's more pressure. The margins are really, really small. ■

# This is a form of recognition: Kalpana

▸ Continued From Page 1

"Inclusivity was one of our key talking points during the elections. This is one of the steps towards honouring our commitment to women cricketers," he said.

Menon said the association is setting up a committee to oversee the implementation. "We have invited applications because records of women's cricket, especially from times before the merger of the men and women's associations, may not be fully complete. Even if a player has featured in a single senior national match, she will be eligible," he explained.

**PARITY PUSH**

While the disbursement process may take a couple of months to begin, Menon confirmed that arrears will be paid from April. The move was widely welcomed within the cricketing community.

Former India wicketkeeper and KSCA managing committee member Kalpana Venkatachar termed it a long-overdue step. "Women cricketers have been asking for this for over a decade. It's not just about the financial support, but also about inclusivity and the pride of having represented the state. This is a form of recognition," she said.

# Sindarov takes lead; Jiner crushes Divya

Amit.Karmarkar
@timesofindia.com

FIDE

**Javokhir Sindarov** created daylight between him and others in Cyprus on Wednesday. If others don't catch up, this could turn out to be one of the most one-sided Candidates chess tournaments as the Uzbek may need only 5.5 points in the remaining 10 rounds to earn a right to challenge D Gukesh for the world crown.

If anyone thought that Sindarov would take it easy after outplaying R Praggnanandhaa with black pieces in the previous round, he came out all guns blazing

**CANDIDATES CHESS**

and humbled joint leader Fabiano Caruana with a deadly offensive that forced resignation after 36 moves in Queens Gambit Accepted.

The 20-year-old, the youngest participant in the eight-player event, jumped to 3.5 points in four rounds. Caruana is on 2.5 points and Praggnanandhaa, Anish Giri and Matthias Blubaum are on two points each.

Caruana had touched a live rating of Elo 2800-plus after his win over China's Wei Yi in the previous round but now he has to pick pieces after this defeat when the tournament resumes on Friday after Thursday's rest day.

Though siblings Praggnanandhaa and R Vaishali drew their fourth-round games against Blubaum and Aleksandra Goryachkina respectively, lowest seed Divya Deshmukh suffered her first defeat in the women's section against top seed Zhu Jiner of China.

Divya had overlooked some major tactics in the previous two games against Vaishali and Goryachkina. She had chances to win the initiative against Vaishali and almost lost against the Russian but the latter showed poor technique.

Jiner too had messed up against Bibisara Assaubayeva in the third round to suffer defeat. She is now on 2/4 with overnight leader Kateryna Lagno losing to Anna Muzychuk for the latter's maiden win in this event.

# Tanishka leads Karnataka's charge

**Tanishka Kapil Kalbhairav** won three bronze medals, including in singles, as Karnataka girls clinched four bronze medals in the 87th Sub-junior and Cadet National table tennis championships in Gandhidham, Gujarat.

Tanishka lost to Bengal's Ankolika Chakraborty 9-11, 6-11, 5-11 in the U-15 girls' singles semifinals to settle for the bronze medal. In the U-13 section, Sakshya went down to Aadya Baheti of Maharashtra after a thrilling battle. Sakshya won the first two games but lost the next three to bow out. She lost 11-7, 11-9, 7-11, 13-11, 12-10. Tanishka and Raashi V Rao lost in the doubles semis 3-11, 4-11, 5-11 to collect her second bronze. Tanishka's victory was the lone bright spot for Karnataka as they went down to Maharashtra 1-3 in the team semifinal in the U-15 category.

**TABLE TENNIS**

**Karnataka results: Girls: U-15 (semis):** **Singles:** Ankolika Chakraborty (Ben) bt Tanishka Kapil Kalbhairav (Kar) 11-9, 11-6, 11-5. **Doubles:** Ankolika/Ahona Ray (Ben) bt Raashi V Rao/Tanishka (Kar) 11-3, 11-4, 11-5 **Team:** Maharashtra bt Karnataka 3-1 (Naisha bt Raashi Rao 11-7, 11-4, 11-7; Myrra lost to Tanishka 8-11, 8-11, 10-12; Naisha/Myraa bt Raashi/Tanishka 11-7, 11-7, 11-8; Naisha bt Tanishka 3-11, 11-9, 11-8, 11-8). **U-13 (semis):** Aadya Baheti (Mah) bt Sakshya Santosh (Kar) 7-11, 9-11, 11-7, 12-11, 12-10. TNN

## Shruthi wins title

Tamil Nadu's L Shruthi weathered a mid-match fightback from Natasha Chethan of Karnataka en route to her maiden junior girls' 9-ball pool national title in Ludhiana. The Coimbatore girl, making her debut, scored a 6-4 victory over the reigning champion in the final. In the junior boys' event, Maharashtra's Aarav Sancheti outplayed Karnataka's Laksh Sharma 7-3 in the title clash.

**NATIONALS**

**Results (final): Junior boys:** Aarav Sancheti (Mah) bt Laksh Sharma (Kar) 7-3. **Junior girls:** L Shruthi (TN) bt Natasha Chethan (Kar) 6-4. TNN

# Beagles ease past HBR

**Bengaluru:** Beagles Basketball Club cruised to a 73-37 win over HBR BC in a boys' final league-cum-knockout match in the State Junior Basketball Championship here.

**Results: Boys: Final league:** Beagles 73 (Haeshan 21, Jayanth 16) bt HBR 37 (Samveg 13, Rishith 11) HT 37-20; PPC 71 (Adithya 22, Rayan 16) bt DK Dist 61 (Lydel 22, Deekshith 12) HT 29-27. **Girls (round-robin league):** Viveks SC 71 (Jeyashree 18, Aarohi 14) bt Mandya Dist 47 (Yashaswini 14, Manasa 13) HT 40-23; DYES Vidyanagar 78 (Sheethal 24, Ishitha 24) bt Beagles 52 (Medha 12, Swathi 10) HT 36-24.

**CV Ramanagar in quarters:** Unbeaten CV Ramanagar topped Group A to storm into the quarterfinals of the KSFA Chief Minister's Cup in Bengaluru on Wednesday. R Sachin struck a hat-trick to power CV Ramanagar to a 5-0 win over Padmanabhanagar. In a Group B contest, Shanthinagar cantered into the last-eight stage as they handed Malleshwaram a 12-1 defeat.

**CITY ROUND-UP**

**Results: Group A:** CV Ramanagar 5 (R Sachin 14, 61, 88, Vineeth M 51, Prince Alwin 69) bt Padmanabhanagar 0. **Group B:** Shanthinagar 12 (Shelton Paul 8, R Neil Joseph 10, Madan Kumar 12, Chris Anthony 26, 38, R Sharath 51, 65, 89, 90+1, Sudeesh Bhat 58-og, Sanjay S 81, 86) bt Malleshwaram 1 (Vishruth Hegde 56). TNN

# New AFI directives on meets participation

Biju.BabuCyriac@timesofindia.com

**Bengaluru:** The Athletics Federation of India (AFI) on Wednesday made it mandatory for athletes to compete in at least three competitions to be able to compete at the Inter-State meet which will serve as the final selection trials for the Asian Games.

"To take part in the National Inter-State Championships, it is mandatory to take part in at least three competitions during the year 2026, organised by the AFI and a state meet if organised by the state association during the period," the AFI said on X.

**ATHLETICS**

It also recalled the earlier directive making it mandatory to compete in at least two AFI events to take part in the Federation meet. The post also added that for the Open Nationals, an athlete has to take part in at least four meets of AFI where the fourth should be either the Federation meet, Inter-State or any meet after the Inter-State meet.

Sources said the new directives are aimed at athletes suspected of doping from competing in only the selection trials and making the Indian team for big meets. "One top athlete did the same last time and is nowhere to be seen now," they said.

> **Athletes & coaches feel the new directive will adversely affect the young and upcoming athletes who struggle to find financial support**

**HIGH ENTRY FEE**

Meanwhile, athletes and coaches said the new directive will adversely affect the young and upcoming athletes who struggle to find financial support.

"The AFI has fixed Rs 1,200 per event as entry fee. For most athletes travelling to a neighbouring state, it works out to about Rs 10,000 per meet, including boarding and lodging. And if they have to do it twice or thrice to compete in the Fed Cup or Inter-State that will be a big burden," a coach said.

Coaches also said that looking at the performance of only the last season is unfair. "Injuries are common and there will be athletes who would have missed the whole of last season. They should look at the performance of the last two years."

# India likely to face Nigeria, Jamaica in UK

Marcus.Mergulhao@timesofindia.com

**Panaji:** The All India Football Federation (AIFF) has confirmed participation of the men's national team at the four-nation Unity Cup in London where Nigeria (world no 21) and Jamaica (71) are expected to be the highest-ranked participating countries.

Nigeria surprisingly missed out on qualification to the FIFA World Cup 2026 at the playoff stage, while Jamaica were one win away from the competition, until they lost a nervy final round qualifier against DR Congo on Tuesday

The two teams are expected to be the biggest attractions at the Unity Cup which will be played from May 26-30. Nigeria, Ghana, Jamaica and Trinidad & Tobago took part in last year's tournament while Republic of Ireland, Nigeria and Jamaica featured in the original Unity Cup held in the summer of 2004. "The Unity Cup features nations with large communities in the UK," a senior official told TOI on Wednesday.

**UNITY CUP**

"India have been invited for the first time." There is no word yet on the fourth participating team, though it's likely to be from Africa. The Unity Cup is a knockout tournament with the semifinal winners moving to the final while the losing teams will feature in the clash for third place.

The Indian football team's first visit to England was at the 1948 London Olympics. The last full-fledged tour was in 2000 when the Bhaichung Bhutia-captained side lost against Fulham (0-2), drew goalless against West Bromwich Albion and concluded the trip by recording a 1-0 victory against Bangladesh in Leicester. "India has a large community in the UK so the team is expected to attract a good crowd," said another official.

This newspaper is published by Manjeet Singh Dhami from Bennett Coleman & Co Ltd., Elixir Chancery Building, 1st, 2nd and 4th Floor, 135, Residency Road, Shanthala Nagar, Bengaluru – 560025 (Phones: Office: EPABX -080- 42200000, Editorial: 080 -46787878) on behalf of Bennett Coleman & Co Ltd., edited by Neelam Raja and printed by Sekar Sai Bennett Coleman & Co Ltd., The Times of India Press, No. 9/10/11-A, 4th Main, KIADB, Bommasandra Industrial Area, Anekal Taluk, Bangalore - 560 099 (Ph : 080-22899999). Regd office: Dr. D.N. Road, Mumbai - 400 001. All rights reserved. Reproduction in whole or in part without written permission is prohibited. REGD. NO. CPMG/KA/GPO-31/2003-05, RNI NO. 45466/85

FLAT 50% Off On making charges + 15% Off On diamond prices
*TCA
CARATLANE
A TATA PRODUCT
FLAT 50% Off On making charges + 15% Off On diamond prices
*TCA
CARATLANE
A TATA PRODUCT

FLAT 50% Off On making charges + 15% Off On diamond prices
*TCA
CARATLANE
A TATA PRODUCT
FLAT 50% Off On making charges + 15% Off On diamond prices
*TCA
CARATLANE
A TATA PRODUCT